



Episode 50
Designer Discussions
Success Story



**Maria: [00:00]**

Welcome to Designer Discussions. Today is our 50th episode, and we are excited to look back and talk a little bit about some of our previous episodes. We have a special guest introduce to you today, and she can talk about her experience working with us.

Intro: [00:05]

Welcome to the Designer Discussion Sessions podcast. Tune in each week where we discuss marketing, branding, PR and business advice for design professionals.

We're opening the Designer Discussions Marketing Studio - a monthly series of in depth, actionable content to guide your marketing, PR and business development. We want to help you transform your business and elevate it to work with your dream clients.

Maria: (00:27)

We are excited to introduce to you Elizabeth Helen. And it's Elizabeth Helen Designs as your business. But you have a new last name?

Elizabeth: (00:37)

Yes, I do. I used to be Elizabeth Perrett. What was the Romanian last name? And now it's Elizabeth Kaminsky. I think it sounds a little bit more exotic.

Maria: (00:47)

It does. It sounds awesome. Okay, so we are super excited today to have Elizabeth Kaminsky. And she is Elizabeth Helen Design. And she was someone that we met on one of our clubhouse calls. And she has an excellent story to demonstrate what it's like to be an interior designer, what it's like to grow your design business, and how to get the PR and the coverage that your design business needs. And she's going to talk to us a little bit about her experience. And we're super excited to have her today on her show. Hi, Elizabeth. Can you introduce yourself and talk to us a little bit about what's been going on with you?



Elizabeth: (01:37)

Hi. Yeah. My name is Elizabeth Kaminsky. I own Elizabeth Han Design, a design company in the greater Metro Detroit area. I can say that I started designing about over ten years ago. After College, I moved to Romania, and I lived there and worked there for ten years. Started as a designer for a small woodworking company, this custom furniture, and slowly worked my way up to design supervisor and then up to become an administrator for a group of companies. It was about eight companies with over 300 people. So I kind of got into more of the business administration responsibility, and I moved back to the US in the beginning of the Pandemic. So mid 2020 and being for personal reasons, I had to be my mom's full time caregiver. And after being here for almost a year, I realized I'm not going back to Romania. So I had to kind of figure a solution to create my own future or when the next season of my life will come about. And I thought, why not just start my own design company? And so that was the middle of 2021, and I got into clubhouse. So I entered into the group Designer discussions where you guys would get kind of the tricks and tips of the trade. That was really helpful for someone almost had to learn from scratch. Again, the system in the US is very different than what it was in Romania. And so I had to relearn what it was to start a business in the US and a design business. And not only that, but obviously coming into the pandemic. The design industry is very different than what it was the last few decades. And so what was so helpful being a part of Clubhouse and being part of this group was that I was able to ask questions depending on the topic that was being spoken. And you guys have been just so helpful and giving the tips. One huge topic was how to get publicized, how to get your work publicized. And the tips that you gave us was so simple is really just putting yourself out there and knowing what your story is and running with it. And you guys gave me the confidence of, yeah, this is my background. I felt very insecure because I didn't have 20 years of experience of working for a said designer or having a certain designer that I worked with here in the States.

**Elizabeth: (04:37)**

But you guys said, no, you have actually a very fascinating story. It's different. This is your edge, run with it. And so that was kind of the encouragement that I had to just take the step forward. And you guys gave me the building blocks and the step by step process of how to do it. And in the beginning of 2022, I actually got published at our Detroit magazine, which is a very prominent magazine here in the Metro Detroit area.

Mirjam: (04:57)

This is one of my favorite stories ever.

Jason: (05:00)

Congratulations on that, Elizabeth. And one of the reasons we wanted to have you on episode 50 is because for any of our listeners that heard episode 25, we actually read your testimonial on that episode. And we had talked about and one of the things we had talked about is that we hand out a lot of information, but there are very few people that actually act on that information. And you were one of the ones that did. And so that's why we have you here. What was it that you heard that had that light bulb head off in your head and say, I can do.

Elizabeth: (05:36)

This for me with the whole publication, just how simple it was. It was the idea of, all right, contact the editor. Just put yourself out there. Even if you get rejected, it's not that big of a deal. Just push forward, allow yourself to be open, and just let the editor know that just to use you, be a resource for them to help them out. And so he made it so simple that it was on my side of, why not, I'll just do it. And if they reject me, if they say I don't have a story, not a big deal, I'll just try someone else. And so I like the fact that you guys just gave us a really simplified way of how to practically do it. It just we have to, as the listener, not allow our fears to paralyze us. It's just taking that step. And if we get rejected, it's all right. And I was rejected by other Editors and they're saying, I don't have enough of a story for you. And that was fine. But someone will hear you out and someone will think it's, oh, you do have a story because each and every one of us have a unique story.



Elizabeth: (06:36)

We just have to, I guess, have someone who encourages you and say, yeah, you do have a unique story. Yeah, I think you should do something about it. And that is the push that helps you step forward and gives you the courage to step forward. And that's what you guys did. You guys told me you have a great story. I think you should step forward.

Mirjam: (07:19)

And it's so interesting because in the end, it all comes down to mindset because everybody who's a professional has a story. And before we were talking, you had a lot of reasons why not to, right? You're like, oh, but I'm new and I haven't really been here. I don't have a lot of projects. I don't have a lot of this. I don't have a lot of that. But if you flip the coin and you look at what you have and you find the courage, because it takes courage it takes to put yourself out there. But this is what can happen. It's amazing. And it goes to show that you take some advice that you just have to take it to heart. This is free advice, right? And if you actually use it, it can become so valuable for your business and you can build your entire PR portfolio around this if you just keep going. So, yeah, kudos to you. I was so proud of you when I heard that.

Elizabeth: (08:29)

Thank you. I definitely agree. It's a mindset. You have to focus on the abilities that you do have because we do all have lack somewhere. But if you just focus on whatever ability you have, run with it and just have the courage to do so. And like you said, you guys give free information. And I wrote this on my review for your podcast. It is pure gold. And if you're not sitting down with a pen and paper listening to your podcast, I mean, there's so much information that is very helpful. I will always have in the back of my mind, the most important thing to have is your own website and your own email list. And that is constantly in the back of my mind because that is your property. And that's something that you guys have repeated constantly. And it doesn't matter how many years of experience you have in this industry. Like I've said before, it has drastically changed. And so you guys have been able to help us in the industry stay current and how to be able to be competitive and how to be able to put ourselves out there because it's no longer what it was ten years ago.

**Jason: (09:29)**

We appreciate the words. And I'm over here laughing when you said website and email list because I preach that all the time. But you'll be surprised at how many people it goes in one ear and out the other. They just don't listen. And I understand a lot of times you don't have a lot of time. You don't know what to do. You don't know direction. And so that's why we have this podcast here, is to help show designers what to do, how to do it, and the steps they need to take. If you've been watching over the last few weeks, we've been talking about behavioral economics. I might let Maria talk a little bit about that, but it's all about mindset, and it's all about getting out of your own head, because a lot of the times in this industry, we have designers that know what to do, but they have a hard time on the business side because I used to teach in architecture and interior design, and we don't teach the other side. We teach design, but not how to own and operate your own design practice. And so that's where a lot of designers get in their own head is, I know the design part, but marketing, PR, selling operations, bookkeeping, all of that. They look at that and they get overwhelmed and they just don't do anything at all. So that's one of the reasons we have started to talk about the behavioral economics. And Maria, I'm looking to talk about.

Maria: (11:08)

Well, what I was going to say is that as interior designers, we're all siloed. We're working by ourselves, with ourselves all day long, and we have clients, and we're dealing with similar types of clients pushback and feedback that's consistent. And we start to think about ourselves and view ourselves from the client pushback and feedback. And we don't have other professionals helping build us up. I completely understand when you came into that clubhouse room and you were like, what do I have to work with? Right? And it was that moment when you were like, I don't see that I have something to work with. And I think it's because in general, most designers are going to see themselves from their clients perspective. How much experience do you have? Have you done these types of projects before? Over and over again? Are you already published? And we measure ourselves on those things, and we don't learn what makes us special and unique and significant and compelling for other people. And so it takes a lot of guts because honestly, where you came from is much more vulnerable than what other people think you need. You really came from this honest, vulnerable, interesting, dynamic story.



Maria: (12:08)

And because you had that behind you, we were like, oh, my gosh, you're fantastic. You're lovable. You're exactly what people want to hear about. And we just want to give that to more designers. We want them to know that their stories are important and what they are doing is significant and that they should be not measuring themselves based on what their clients are saying and doing, but on what they're really valuable for.

Elizabeth: (12:59)

Yes, I agree to that.

Jason: (13:02)

So now that we have you on and I'm going to put you on the spot just a little bit, Elizabeth and everybody else on here that didn't know that I was going to have this happen. But we're going to share some of the episodes that we have liked in the past. And I may ask, other than the PR one which you acted on and you got published from, what are some of the other episodes that have highlighted in your mind in terms of, okay, I actually learned something. I'm going to hand you a little time to think about that. While you are thinking about that, I'm going to talk a little bit about some of the episodes we've had that I've heard from other listeners that they like. And one of them is on SEO. So we actually had a couple of episodes on SEO. One we had with Michelle and she had talked about the SEO 101. I did actually two more episodes after that to talk about how to implement SEO on your website and just the basics you need to do to Institute SEO on your site. And I've heard from a few designers that have used some of the tactics and have seen some success on their website. And so that's why I love this. What we do is because when we hear from designers and when I hear from designers that are implementing this and they have success, that energizes me to say, okay, I'm not just up here an hour on Monday talking and it's not heading anywhere. But actually there are designers out there that are taking this information and implementing it and have a success. So those are some of the ones that I would say I'm going to call on Maria next. I'm sure she's going to talk about the behavioral economics because we've had a whole session on that. So I'm going to let you talk about that Maria.



Maria: (14:08)

I love behavioral economics. I know. And it's the nerdiest, most terribly boring concept in the whole entire world whenever you really look at it. I even went to a conference because I can't get enough learning about it. It's literally the science behind why people buy things. Like who knew that it's like a dance or a concept, like an outline for a book. If you just start with the right things, if you fill it in with the right things, then you get the same replicable results at the end of a process with your client, if you're fully aware of why they would make those decisions. And honestly, one of my big things is if you're going to have a podcast, if you ever want to get involved in anything where you're really creating content, learning is the groundwork for why you can create the content in the future. And I have deeply loved digging in and researching and learning about behavioral economics. It's actually a whole career industry that people can get into where they create changes and shifts in large corporations. And I've enjoyed learning about it so that I can apply it to our small business so that everybody can get the perks of understanding why behavioral economics could help them to sell more. Because behavioral economics is the reason why people buy it's not what they're buying, it's not how much money they're spending, it's why they are willing to say buy it's, giving everybody the Yoda of interior design skills so that we can Jedi mind trick everyone around us into wanting to hit that yes button at the end of a client appointment. And the more I learn about it, I can look back over my 20 years of experience and see all of the failures that have been in my way. And I just don't want other people to take and do the same thing. I want people to understand that you have to build trust it's through a series of events. I want people to understand that your client forgets and at what rate they forget. I want people to understand that dopamine the thing that causes people to have an addiction is actually part of our design process. And if you don't lean into it, you're going to be fighting it. And when you fight it, it looks like your client's shopping you whenever you start to pull back and see that our processes, our systems and the way our design businesses work and the problems that we fight, these obstacles that we come across over and over again are actually part of our systems that are creating the problem.



Maria: (17:08)

I'm just super excited to be bringing that and talking about it and opening designers eyes to understand why is it that people buy? What do you need to be doing to make bigger sales to increase your clients budgets? And what do you need to be doing to just make your life easier and improve that communication between the client and the designer experience? I'm excited. I'm just happy to bring that to everybody.

Miriam: (18:05)

I have to say, I've been finding behavioral economics very interesting. And ever since Maria started talking about. It, I hear about it everywhere. It's like when you buy a red car and then all you see is red cars or you're pregnant and everybody it's like this thing that you didn't know was there, and once you know about it, you see it everywhere. So it's fascinating. I'm even reading the book that talks about it also, so there's lots more to come about that. But on my side of the fence, like on the PR fence. My most favorite part about the podcast is to learn about everything else. I've learned so much from both Jason and Maria and from the people who come on our podcast is just fascinating. I feel like every week whenever somebody comes or we talk amongst ourselves, there's new learnings. And I just love that teamwork that we have in terms of episodes. My favorite episode was the episode of my brand partnerships with one of my clients, actually, who doesn't work for a big brand. It's like a medium sized brand. And I think it's just a topic that's so widely appreciated and misunderstood that I found it very refreshing. And Maria's reaction is always something I can gauge. She's like my test like listener because she has the designer perspective. And if it's enlightening for her, then I know it's good stuff. And I think that's what that did. And I hope that a lot. I hope that everybody listens to it just to put things in perspective. Right.

Jason: (19:57)

So now, Elizabeth, I hope now that I'm putting you on the spot that you have some time to think about other than the PR episode that you acted on, because I know that's your favorite episode because you actually acted on that episode and results happen. So other than that episode, what other ones come to mind?



Elizabeth: (20:17)

So I mentioned earlier that it's really a good idea to kind of take notes on your episode. And so I actually have a folder with you guys' episodes and what episode is in the notes that I would take? Because I forget I remembered that I had this note. I was like, oh, well, I have my episodes and I know what to choose from. So I actually really liked the episode 27, The Understanding Influencer Marketing for Interior Designers. I actually spoke with Miriam earlier that I'm kind of veering towards the content creation part of design just because of the season where my life is at right now. I enjoy research. I enjoy finding information. I enjoy knowing what is going on all across the globe in design and in sustainable design, especially right now. And so I do want to focus on probably the influencer side of the design world. And so that podcast, that episode, I just throw down so many different notes on kind of how the tips and tricks of being an influencer and content creator within the design world and how that's slightly different. And you have a separate episode about lifestyle content creators compared to a designer content creator and how to go about that. I did enjoy that one a lot.

Jason: (21:50)

You had also talked about green design and sustainability. For anybody that hasn't heard episode we have with Jamie Cole, that's episode 48. So listen to that one as well. That'll be a good one. Perfect. So for the future, we have a lot planned, and we do plan to have more designers on that have had success just to talk about where did they start, where they are now, and what have they learned that can actually help our listeners out? So we are going to do a little bit more of that in the future, along with what you love teaching you about marketing, PR, business development and all those other things.

**Mirjam: (22:50)**

Part of what we do too is that we focus on the basics and on developments that happen within SEO. It's like you could probably have an episode on SEO every other month or more often and the content would already have changed. It's like on the PR side, like the media are constantly changing so there's always ways you can adapt and I'm hoping to share more really of those tangible tips and strategies that allow people like Elizabeth to use them and have some success without having to spend hours and weeks and months and thousands of dollars. That would be my goal, yes.

Maria: (23:25)

So I would love for people who listen to our episodes to let us know more of what they would like to hear. I think the best way we can serve you and create the best content for you as an industry is to reach out to us. Feel free to direct message us through Instagram. We have designer discussions, come to our podcast, leave a review, leave a question in there. We will read those. It's always best to create and curate the content with the audience in mind and getting feedback from them. So please reach out to us. We want to hear from you Elizabeth.

Jason: (24:03)

If any of our listeners want to get in contact with you, how do they do something?

Elizabeth: (24:07)

They could go to my Instagram account, send me a DM. Elizabeth Helen, design all one word or go on my website. Elizabethallen.com shoot me an email. I try to respond as quickly as possible.

Jason: (24:22)

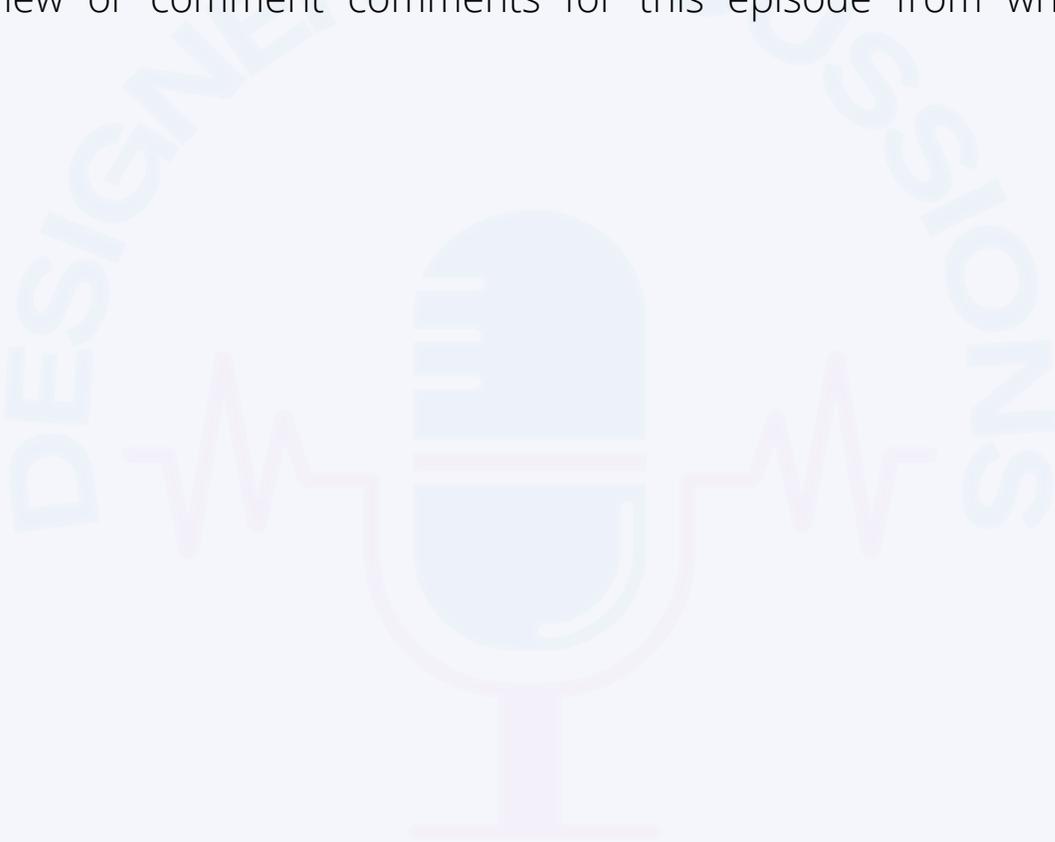
We appreciate having you here and this is as we talked about our highlight episode 50 and we hope to have you here for 5100 thousand more. Sounds great. We hope everybody has enjoyed this episode and we hope to see you all here next week on designer discussions.



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Outro: (24:42)

We hope you enjoyed this episode of designer discussions. What was your takeaway care to share your thoughts and tag Jason, Maria and Mirjam on social media. You can find them on all platforms@designerdiscussion.com. Don't forget to like subscribe and leave a review or comment comments for this episode from wherever you are listening.





DESIGNER DISCUSSIONS

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