

How I Turned My Hobbies Into Profitable Side Businesses With My Friends – Without Losing the Joy

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We all spend time doing things that make us feel good – going for walks, hanging out with friends, working on hobbies or just sharing ideas with people we trust. What if you could take some of those moments and turn them into something more?

For me, it's not about chasing money or killing the fun. It's about making the good things even better – more connected, more meaningful, and yes, sometimes more profitable. I'm not saying you *should* monetize your hobbies or your relationships. But I've found that when it feels right, it can bring even more joy, depth and motivation to the things you already enjoy doing.

This article isn't about hustle culture or over-optimization. It's just a look at how a few of my everyday interests, friendships and collaborations naturally evolved into small income streams with no pressure and a lot of enjoyment along the way.

By the time you finish reading this, you'll see exactly why they call me Mr. 20% and how a few simple partnerships can turn passion into profit without eliminating the joy.

Related: Want to Turn Your Hobby Into Income? Here's What You Need to Know First.

Combining coaching and marketing skills to build a boxing course

I've been training consistently with my boxing coach, and over time, we started thinking seriously about turning our sessions into something more. He brings boxing and coaching skills. I bring experience in online business and marketing skills. We're friends, we trust each other, and it made sense to combine our strengths and build something together. That's how the idea for our video-based boxing course came up – structured, practical lessons that people can actually follow from home.

The virtual fitness market is booming, and AI-driven online training is fueling a 32.7% growth, according to CreatePT. That's why we also decided to integrate AI, not just as a trend, but as a tool to offer real-time support, guidance and a better experience for our students.

Turning friendships into partnerships

While most of my hobbies are physical or nature-related, I'm now expanding into projects with friends that mix online skills with offline businesses. For example, I have friends who run personal training studios, and I'm becoming a partner to help transform their offline operations. My role will focus on improving their local presence – optimizing their Google My Business profiles, managing and boosting reviews and enhancing how they attract clients nearby.

According to Adsy, about 75% of all ecommerce transactions are carried out as indirect sales. That also means businesses not using this method are missing out on up to 80% of their sales opportunities. That's why I see local optimization as more than just marketing – it's a way to unlock serious growth

that's already happening around them. In return, I'll take 20% of the new profits these improvements bring in, turning this into a sustainable side business that delivers value on both ends.

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Turning nature walks into group guided hiking adventures

I've always loved being a guide in nature, leading hikes through forests, national parks and beautiful trails. Walking and exploring the outdoors is my passion, and meeting new, fresh people while doing it makes it even better. Before and during Covid, I did this as a hobby, just enjoying the experience, but now I'm ready to take it to the next level and turn it into a real opportunity. My plan is to create profiles on platforms like Booking and Airbnb Experiences, so I can reach more people who want to join me on hikes and outdoor adventures.

According to The Janda Law Firm, over 118 million people hike globally, and the global market size for hiking is valued at \$12.24 billion. That's exactly why this feels like the right time to step forward and build something around what I already love doing.

Dog walking

The dog walking industry in the U.S. was valued at \$1.7 billion in 2024, showing just how popular and profitable this field has become. I enjoy walking, and my girlfriend loves walking dogs, so this hobby has naturally brought us together. Since we both live in small apartments where having a dog isn't possible, dog walking is a perfect way for her to spend time with dogs and for us to enjoy being outside together. She

even makes money from it, and now we're thinking about expanding this hobby by creating a platform that connects dog owners with reliable walkers, turning something we love into a bigger opportunity.

Expanding business opportunities in the transcription and translation industry

I'm partnering with a close friend who owns transcription and translation agencies, taking a 20% share as we work together to modernize and grow their business. My role focuses on integrating advanced AI tools to automate workflows and improve efficiency, while also optimizing their online presence through SEO and targeted marketing campaigns. This helps attract more clients and increase revenue.

According to Ditto, the transcription market is currently valued at \$3.01 billion in 2024 and is forecasted to nearly triple, reaching \$9.51 billion by 2034. With the rapid growth driven by increasing content creation and global communication needs, I see huge potential to build a sustainable, scalable business while helping my friend succeed in a competitive industry.

Related: [Make Money Doing What You Love – 10 Key Tips on Monetizing Your Passion](#)

Building small SaaS tools

One of the things I really enjoy is buying old domains and turning them into small SaaS tools. I don't code myself, but that's never stopped me. I use AI tools to build out the core functions, and lately, I've been working with my younger cousin – he's just starting out as a junior programmer. He's learning fast and using the same AI tools to build and improve

the products. It's a way for both of us to grow: I get to experiment with ideas, he gains real-world experience, and we both make money once the sites start getting traffic and subscribers.

According to ScienceSoft, more than 30,500 SaaS companies are competing for users' attention today. That's why we focus on building simple, niche tools with clear value – no fluff, just utility – and we're turning this into a fun and profitable side hustle.

In the end, it's not just about turning hobbies into income. Sometimes it's about combining your skills with the people you already enjoy spending time with. A good hobby can turn into something more when it's mixed with trust, shared curiosity and complementary strengths. Whether it's boxing with a friend, building tools with my younger cousin or helping someone grow their local business, it all starts with a real connection. The money is just a bonus. What matters most is that it feels natural, fulfilling and fun. That's what makes it sustainable. That's what makes it real.

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