

MAGIC HOUR PODCAST

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Magic Hour Podcast | Ep 25 | Jamie Anne Vaughan

Transcript – The Magic Hour Podcast, Episode 25: The Art of 'And' with Jamie Anne Vaughan Recorded: May 1, 2025

Hope Mikal: Let's start with your journey. I would love for you to share how you've built your incredible career through communications and entrepreneurship—and what led you to start Westwood Strategies.

Jamie Anne Vaughan: So I'm from Toronto originally, and I now live in Calgary, Alberta...

(Transcript already included above)

Jamie: ...There's a lot happening behind the scenes that most people just don't see.

Hope: Incredible. How do you approach building trust and authenticity in a legacy-driven industry like agriculture?

Jamie: You nailed it—these stories are powerful. You've got legacy farms passed down through generations, but they're also complex businesses. Today's farms span thousands of acres, and they need operations support, HR, financial systems... they're full-fledged companies. There's a myth about what farms look like. Part of our work is showing that modern agriculture is strategic and sophisticated.

Hope: And when you say crop input companies, what does that mean?

Jamie: Basically, it's the companies that provide fertilizers or treatments for crops. They're competing for attention just like any other B2C brand. Marketing matters there too—whether it's hearing about a product over coffee or scrolling Twitter in the tractor cab.

Hope: Amazing. And I love that you're applying strategies from other industries—like, what would we do if we were selling shoes? Let's test that in ag!

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Jamie: Exactly. That cross-pollination has been such a cool part of the work.

Hope: What are some of the misconceptions you've had to challenge?

Jamie: One big one is that people in ag think, "We don't need to market. Our product sells itself." But consumers now want to know more: where did this come from? How was it made? That curiosity is pushing more folks in ag to open up, tell their story, and be more visible.

Hope: And these are such powerful stories.

Jamie: Absolutely. Indigenous-led projects, family-run farms, new tech—it's all so rich and meaningful. And finally, people are open to sharing and listening.

Hope: What's been your favourite story to tell so far?

Jamie: Honestly, podcasts have been huge. One of our clients launched one and it's been a hit. It's the perfect format—farmers can listen while working. It's passive, it's portable, and it builds community.

Hope: Wait—there are ag podcasts?

Jamie: Oh yes! Tons. And we've pitched clients on other shows too—ones focused on entrepreneurship or sustainability. Because farmers *are* entrepreneurs. It's about getting those stories out to more audiences.

Hope: Are there any modern marketing trends being adopted in the ag space?

Jamie: Definitely. Social media is huge—especially Twitter (well, "X") and Facebook groups. But TikTok has been wild. There's a whole side of the app called "FarmTok." People post machinery, crop updates, behind-the-scenes footage... and it's resonating. They're not always selling—they're just telling stories and building community.

Hope: I love that. And how are farmers reacting to this shift into digital?

Jamie: They're seeing the value. Policymakers are taking notice. Bigger companies are paying attention. Digital visibility is amplifying what's already happening in the

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fields—and opening doors for global connection. A farmer in Kelowna might inspire one in France. That's the power of storytelling.

Hope: So good. You're also a new mom—congrats! How are you navigating motherhood and running a business?

Jamie: Thank you! It's been a wild eight months. I don't believe in balance—I believe in priorities. I use the “If it's not a f*ck yes, it's a no” approach. And I lean into the Pareto principle: what's the 20% that will drive 80% of results? That helps me stay focused on what matters.

Hope: Did you take maternity leave?

Jamie: I took six weeks fully off, phone down, emails off. It was terrifying but so needed. My team was amazing. We lost a couple of clients, but we planned ahead and built trust in advance. The reality is, being self-employed means you don't have access to traditional EI the same way. So I tell people—talk to your accountant early.

Hope: Any advice for women balancing career growth and motherhood?

Jamie: Don't do it alone. Support doesn't have to mean paying for help. Barter with neighbours. Swap skills. Ask for grocery runs. Let your community show up for you. There are creative ways to stay resourced.

Hope: That's beautiful. What are your non-negotiables for protecting time and energy?

Jamie: Mondays and Fridays = no meetings. I bookend my week with CEO time—planning Monday AM and reflecting Friday PM. I also only say yes to what really excites me. And if I can't take it on, I refer someone in my network. There's enough work for everyone.

Hope: Love that. It's all about community. And it's okay to say no. What about mom guilt—has that shown up?

Jamie: Yes! She's only eight months, but I feel it. I'm reframing it though—by working, I'm showing her that I find meaning and joy in what I do. I'll miss things sometimes, but I'm building a life with intention. That matters.

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Hope: What mindset shifts have helped you embrace both ambition and motherhood?

Jamie: Two things: 1) The power of “and”—I can be a mom *and* an entrepreneur *and* so many things. And 2) There’s no perfect balance—just shifting priorities. Be present where you are. Let go of perfection.

Hope: Okay—let’s pick your PR brain. What’s the first step a business should take if they want to be seen as an industry leader?

Jamie: Build your personal brand. Even if you work in a company, your voice matters. People trust people—not companies. Start small. Pick a channel that fits you. You don’t need to do it all. Just show up.

Hope: I’ve been thinking about this a lot. Part of me wants to disappear from social. But I also know how powerful it is.

Jamie: Totally. And complexity can be the enemy of execution. Start before you’re ready. Let it evolve.

Hope: Okay, what about scrappy PR? How can small agencies get coverage without big budgets?

Jamie: Start with what you *own*—your email list, your website, your blog. Social is great, but algorithms change. Prioritize owned channels first. Then look at earned media. Ask: what’s newsworthy? Not everything is pitchable. Be intentional.

Hope: Do relationships still matter in PR? Or can anyone get into The Globe?

Jamie: Relationships help, especially with big outlets. But now, you can also DM a journalist, reply to a LinkedIn request for sources—there are lots of new ways to get visibility. You can get creative.

Hope: What’s one underrated PR tactic?

Jamie: Podcasts! The ROI is massive. They’re intimate, they’re niche, and their listeners are loyal. Way more impactful than a one-time feature in a traditional outlet.

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Hope: Yes! I've realized that my podcast is how I want people to get to know me—and Unicorn. It's part of my funnel now.

Jamie: Absolutely. It's your personal brand in action. People who inquire after listening to your podcast are already warmed up. They get your tone, your values. They've basically pre-vetted themselves.

Hope: Okay, I'm officially rethinking my whole strategy. You're right. This is a personal brand. This is the "and."

Jamie: Yes! Own that. And keep a "someday" doc of all your big ideas. When you're ready, you'll pick one up.

Hope: Speaking of that—you just launched a newsletter! Tell me everything.

Jamie: Yes! It's called *The Art of And*. I wanted a space to share beyond LinkedIn—especially writing that feels more personal. Email feels like a diary to me. I get to teach, reflect, and add value. No plans to monetize it—just connection.

Hope: Where can people sign up?

Jamie: theartofand.ca. And you can also find me on LinkedIn at Jamie Anne Vaughan.

Hope: One last thing—what's your take on LinkedIn? Worth spending time there?

Jamie: Definitely. Only 1% of users post regularly, so it's wide open. Thoughtful posts, carousels, longform—it's a great space to teach and build trust. And opportunities flow from there, like speaking gigs or partnerships.

Hope: Thank you for all the insight and inspiration today. This was such a powerful conversation.

Jamie: Thank you! It's been a joy.

Hope: You can find Jamie at westwoodstrategies.ca or sign up for her newsletter at theartofand.ca. And don't forget to follow The Magic Hour Podcast at @itsthemagichourpodcast on Instagram or head to unicornmarketingco.ca/podcast to listen, subscribe, and explore more.