

MAGIC HOUR PODCAST

CREATIVE PODCAST BY UNICORN MARKETING CO.

[Magic Hour Podcast | Episode 11 | Sid Baar](#)

I'm your host and welcome to the magic hour. Today, I'm chatting with Sid Barr, owner of Say Hey Studio. I'm excited to learn about their journey into developing branding and website design, getting into this whole designer world, talking about living that remote work life dream, and all about what it's like working, living, and existing with chronic pain. Let's make some magic.

1:20 Tell me a little bit about yourself and your company, Say Hey Studio.

- Learn about Sid and how they are passionate about accessible and intuitive design.
- They are the founder of the creative design agency, Say Hey Studio. The agency helps brands tell stories through bold visuals and thoughtful design.

2:12 What was your experience like working in male-dominated tech and how did you come to this conclusion that you wanted to start your own company?

- Sid had to cut their teeth and start from scratch.
- Sid got their first full-time job in design at a real estate tech startup. They were designing software for real estate for the industry, and it was a male-dominated field.
- After some time, Sid became a little bit disillusioned with that whole idea of, "I'm a man in charge and I know what's best and I'm going to tell you what to do".

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6:36 You wanted to work with women and connect with passionate, creative people. Can you talk more about how this could have been a risk to starting your business?

- It was important to work with women, but now it's expanded to champion women in business, especially the ones that run the show on their own terms.
- Sid also wanted to support non-binary people and trans people.
- Sid is trying to learn as much as they can and decolonize their work.

8:46 You talked a little bit about how you were volunteering your time on the weekends, learning about the different communities, and networking with people. How did that help you get to where you are now?

- Volunteering has helped Sid with her depression and anxiety by getting out of your house, getting out of your head, and putting the focus on someone else.

10:50 How have you seen that design has changed over the years since you started your company to now?

- It's changed a lot with technology, and Sid has seen the biggest shift with the rise of AI in design.
- If we can embrace some AI elements for our own workflow, it can be really helpful.
- No fear! Sid doesn't think AI is going to replace creative people or creativity (yet!).

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13:27 You have been living the dream of remote work and travelling, and I believe you've just settled down now on the East Coast. How can you describe what it was like to work as a digital nomad? Tell us about your experience.

- It is a huge privilege to be able to travel. Sid left the dreary, wet, rainy, cold, gray city of Vancouver to go to the coast of Oaxaca in Mexico.
- Living and working in Mexico was pretty transformative in the way of travelling, seeing how other people live, trying to get integrated into a community, and learning a language.
- You can learn so much from people.
- Every day Sid would stop working at 5:00pm to make sure they could watch the sunset at 5:30pm.
- Sid is in a place where they are able to do work on their own.

17:36 Tell us what a day in the life of Sid is like.

- The main thing getting into a new city is figuring out the new flow of how you want to live your life.
- When Sid came back to Canada, they struggled with their mental health for a bit which affect daily life and work.
- Now they are in a good place and the day usually consists of getting up, going for a walk with their dog, going to the dog park, lots of coffee in the morning, water, and stretching.
- Sid's work is nice because it's varied. Sometimes it's working on a web design project, sometimes it's doing project management, sometimes it's looking for a backdrop.

20:09 What would you say your creative process is like? How do you get into the zone?

- It's important to start off with eating and taking care of the body.
- A big part that's helped Sid's creative process is the book called The Artist's Way.

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24:25 Where do you find inspiration when you're designing for a new client?

- Obviously online! You can find so much inspiration.
- What really helps is getting a clear understanding of what someone's looking for. Trying to get down to the core of "what's the problem we're trying to solve".
- Travelling can be super important in the creative process as well.
- It's really important to have new ways of making art by doing design.

26:17 What are some of your favourite campaigns that you've worked on in the past?

- A company called Bright Web! They are a social impact design agency, so they work with other companies working towards affordable housing or climate resources, and other good causes.
- As Sid gets older, they want to make more of a difference in any small, tangible way.
- The more aligned you are with your clients, the better the work gets sometimes too.

28:11 We had been chatting before and talked a bit about living with chronic pain. Would you like to share a little bit of your story about this?

- Sid was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis when they were three which is inflammation of the colon.
- Sid has had multiple surgeries and issues with pain around the stomach and digestion.
- If they're not like a well oil machined in certain respects, then they just start falling apart.
- There's a big brain and gut connection, so Sid believes that some of their depression is linked.

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32:27 How does your chronic pain affect your work-life balance?

- Migraines can be crippling
- It's being open with different agencies and communicating deadlines and if they can't be met.
- After COVID, more people are talking about mental health days and the wholeness of a person instead of what is your work output.
- People aren't talking about their chronic pain issues very much in the workspace or in their own journeys, so it's really important to share that people aren't alone and that there's support and a community out there of people who are willing to listen.

35:03 Accessibility in design is such a beautiful, big, big topic, and it's getting more and more attention for good measure as of late. Tell us a bit about how you work with accessibility in your design process, and how do you ensure that your designs are as accessible as possible?

- There are so many different people online and everyone needs to be able to access websites to get information, value, and content.
- There are basic principles and anyone who has a website should look into including online accessibility checkers that you can run through Google Lighthouse.
- Ensuring your site allows keyboard navigation, using high contrast colors, and providing alt text for images.
- If your website is not created thinking about accessibility already, you're going to be losing some of the ways to make it accessible.

39:53 In your opinion, what is the most important thing about design to pay attention to?

- Design harmony, no conflict, and making sure things work together.
- What problem are you solving? Is something working?

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49:58 What are some of the design trends that you're seeing nowadays that you're super excited about?

- Some of the AI functionalities, in terms of making life a little bit easier in Photoshop.
- More inclusive visuals and more inclusive language.
- Just more representation of everyone that we actually see like the world.

42:55 How do you measure success for yourself as a designer?

- By being happy to get up and actually do the work, because not every day is going to be exciting to see the list of to-do's.
- Especially building yourself, building a website, building your business, you just go one step at a time.
- Try not to compare yourself to others, but maybe use it as a goal.

48:22 Yay or Neighhhh

A listener wrote in to talk about their experience in the industry, and more specifically, pride washing. The listener wrote that they helped a business with social media and that the company wanted to use Pride Month as a way to make sales.

- The story is a Neighhhh!
- Sid has run into that issue too in her work experiences.
- It's important to have value-aligned clients.

56:52 Is there anything else that you want to share with us before we part ways in this conversation? Tell us about where we can find you.

- Be kind to yourself and be kind to others. Let's all just be easy on ourselves.
- The business name is Say Hey Studio.
- Instagram is @sayheystudio.com.
- LinkedIn is Say Hey Studio and Sid Baar.