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Hi, everybody. Michelle has just reminded me, it is month five of our monthly content recording, 15 ideas in 15 minutes, there or thereabouts. Like this is the fifth one, Michelle. How can that even be? How?

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I kind of, I honestly still feel like, even though it's quite sunny outside, it's still just February.

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It's just so weird, isn't it? I hope you're all noticing the lovely locks, the lovely locks. Yes, we both managed to go to the hairdressers. We are thrilled. We did wait a little bit longer to record this because we were going to the hairdressers. We are that vain, plus it's great content because we're just trying to talk about people opening up. So let's have a look.

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The, the really obvious ones this month, Michelle are early May bank holiday, which is on the 3rd. And then we've got the bank holiday at the end of the month on the 31st. So hopefully we're all going to get some time off, some days off. What are you scheduling? What are you doing on the bank holiday? Behind the scenes stuff really works. But I really wanted to ask you, really want to ask you Michelle, about the 17th of May, which is obviously this well fingers crossed fingers crossed is the day that everything, the next stage can reopen.

[\(01:14\):](#)

And we've just have these last few weeks where everybody has been opening and the numbers are still dropping and COVID is still not coming back. So we're all crossing everything. And my question to you and to everybody is about the content related to that, because do you think that this wave of, this wave of positivity for small business is going to last? You know, the whole buy UK, buy small, we're going to start supporting the high street now, we've really missed everybody because for me, this is the kind of content people need to be jumping on right now, but before it does get back to normal, right? What do you think? What are your thoughts, Michelle?

[\(01:55\):](#)

I think it's lovely to be, and I do still, I'm one of those people that still feels actually quite nervous being out and about, but I went into a local bookshop in one of our Northumberland villages, little bookshop up in Corbridge today. And it was beautiful being in a book shop and buying a book in person and talking to people. It was so lovely. So for me, and for you, Nic, as a supporter of small independent businesses, I want this to last, and I hope it does last because it's lovely seeing people out and about, and reducing that reliance on the, the biggies who can deliver everything from A to Z, with a smile. You sort of, you know who I mean.

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Yeah.

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To be able to order and buy locally again is, is fantastic. And that, and I think people will be wanting to go into their local shops and support their local shops for, for the craic, for the conversation for the community again.

[\(03:01\)](#):

So whilst I'm very hopeful that we do all start to support our high streets. And we have, if you watch back the past sort of four months, we've said you need to sell. Even when we've been going through, COVID when we've been in lockdown, you need to be selling. So now that we're coming out of it, it's even more important that you, as a small business owner do sell, do market.

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My worry is, I'm thinking on it with you, is that for those businesses who have just opened up in the past couple of weeks, or who will be opening up, all being well in May, that they're so head down busy, serving the customers, talking to everyone. I know my beautiful hairdresser has had to make longer appointments, not just because we had so much hair to cut, but because she knew she'd be talking to people.

[\(03:53\)](#):

And she's worked pretty much, 12 hour days, six days a week for the past two weeks or whatever it is, and she is dead and on her feet. So how then does she then do content? How does she write a blog? How does she do Instagram posts? So when you are so busy, how do you do your content? But what we always have taught people from the dawn of time is that you have to, when you're busy, because otherwise that happens. People are sort of, they're like busier than busy. Does that make sense at the minute? Catching up, there's queues out of their shops and we still need them to do some content. Even a teeny weeny bit.

[\(04:38\)](#):

Even a picture of the queue, if you've got permission. A picture of someones coming in the shop, if you've got permission, just ask, Can I take a photo of you? I'm so excited. I'm putting you on Instagram

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And say to someone, like, you know, we are so busy and it's so lovely, but can you do me a favour if we've given you good customer service today, can you take a photo and tag us on there, because we are too busy at the minute to do our own marketing. And if you ask, 3 out of every 10 people and 1 out of every 10 people then does it, you've suddenly got your customers doing your content for you. So before things get crazy busy, look and see how you can make your general marketing, I know this is about more about content ideas, but how you can make your general marketing as easy as possible and how you can capitalise on it, because in a way, all being well, things will just go back to normal by mid summer, early autumn. So then you're back on the, how do I get my customers through the door? How do I, you know,

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It's an opportunity because I think a lot of small businesses will see different people through the door. I went to my hairdresser, also doing 12 hours a day. She's not bothered at all. Because she's got a lot of time to make up, but there are people just wandering in who just didn't know she existed before, because maybe their hairdressers was full. They want a haircut right now. Well, she's full as well, but she is booking people in a month's time because that is literally all she has.

[\(06:12\)](#):

But that opportunity from all those walk-ins, for getting that data, those numbers, that thing, getting new customers out of it, you know, right now it's absolutely extraordinarily important to do the best customer service ever, the best marketing ever, to back up you're open.

[\(06:30\)](#):

I went into Corbridge today. I didn't tell you I was there too. And I went into somewhere and the guy that was behind the counter in his shop did not look up from his phone when I walked in. Didn't look, didn't even acknowledge us. We walked around downstairs around upstairs. Didn't acknowledge us at all. Not buying, just not. If you cannot even be bothered to lift your head forward and greet us, stand up, say hello. We're past customers who've bought there before, then I'm not going to buy. Because right now, all of us online, offline, wherever, we've got this opportunity as we're welcoming people back, because their buying habits may change again. As new people find us then we should be at the top of our game. There's no, there's no reason not to be at the top of our game. And really honestly, being super, super busy, take a picture in your lunchtime, when you're sitting on the loo and send it out.

[\(07:23\)](#):

Yes, I have done that before everybody asks. Plenty of times, my phone's been down the toilet twice. Right? Okay. But what I'm saying is, you know, this is this time to jump on this wave. Let's hope it lasts. Let's hope we get some summer markets and some autumn markets and some Christmas markets where all of this stuff is going to still explode. But if people aren't doing it, if we're not jumping on it and everything is content. Take a video of the shop, video yourself, going into the shop, out the shop, video yourself putting stuff on the shelf, do a video of you unpacking the stuff. Anything like, as long as it's from there, because what we're talking about is that a good message might be whether we're talking about a Facebook post or you're doing Instagram Reels and they cannot be as edited as normal, or you want to do a blog about new products. You're sending an email that may be, this is the month that actually it needs to be done, not perfect.

[\(08:24\)](#):

And your customers, and new potential customers would rather see what you've got to offer than not see it at all. You know, like that guy, that guy might have been, Hey guys. I'm just, I'm really, busy. People are ringing to see if I'm open on a Sunday, but look around. You would have been like, Oh brilliant.

[\(08:43\)](#):

It's that done, not perfect and making the effort. And you've got a real chance now to, like you said, Nic, find new people welcome new customers. If you are in any sort of shop, butcher, baker, candlestick makers get people's email addresses, you know, suggest that they follow you on Instagram, because what you've said there about you hope this wave takes us through. And then I said before about you even you're on the peak of the peak, but you're going to dip. You're going to dip less. If over this really busy time, when you've got queues out of the door and you're working 12 hour days, you've got people following you on Instagram. You've collected email addresses. So, and we know that in normal times people are like, Oh yeah, I never asked for email addresses. Oh, I never asked people to tag me on Instagram. Now's the time you've got to do it.

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Right. Everything's a choice there. That's what that poster says. Choose to ask people, choose to ask for reviews, choose to ask if you can take a photo of them. Choose. It is a choice and it's all of our choices to put content on and off. And sometimes we've got loads of excuses or reasons or excuses I'm going to be my usual bluntish self, because at the end of the day, it is like, if we're going to make just a minute to do a quick post, done not perfect and let people see us. Right. And that's what brings the next person through the door or that next deal. You know, if you stop your marketing you get nowt, or it just starts fizzling off. And then you're left sitting there with no clients. And it's like, Oh,

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If you're on Insta and you're like, I know I kind of haven't got time to do Instagram posts this month, or Reels, then do stories. I'm doing my 8:00 AM, my 12:00 PM or 4:00 PM. And then make yourself a little highlights called reopening in May and have it all ending up as a little May stories, you know, as a little highlight. So it's all there. And yes, it disappears within 24 hours. But people who love you, or people who are intrigued by you will like watching your stories. And even if it's just, you know, day one, reopening or opening the door, or like you said, the queue every day and smiley faces.

[\(11:04\):](#)

8.25, me lying on the bed because I'm that shattered. I mean, you can have so much out of this, Michelle, that's the point. And just, I think I wanted to have this discussion because I really don't want people to miss this opportunity and we don't know what's happening next, you know? And there is an opportunity right now to get new customers, to get your faces seen. People want to spend their money, people want you to go into that bookshop instead of using the very big online sellers. People want to walk in and people need human interaction. They're looking to spend in different places as well. If you're open, then, you know, make sure people know all about your values but, as it's been at least 15 minutes we're going to give you some more days. Are you ready? Is everybody ready? Right.

[\(11:54\):](#)

Okay. So I like national walking month, which is the 1st of May, cause everybody can do a post or content about walking, like everybody.

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What do you think about world laughter day on the 2nd May?

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Oh, definitely. And you know, and again, coming back to this sort of content during the month when you're busy and reopened and like people buy people, people buy, smiles, people buy joy. So if you've got the laughter of your customers in the shop or that like, yes, laughter we, we need it. So definitely do something that day.

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So do you ever join in with this May the 4th be with you thing?

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No, but my husband can do a really, really good Chewbacca impersonation. You know what I mean, impression. And so can my little girl. I can't talk, but they can do really good impressions. So

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I love impersonation. I love it. I love that we've created a new word everybody. World fair trade day. I always support world fair trade day and that's on the 8th. It's also no socks day. I hate socks. I've got an aversion to socks, so I'm going to have some of that. Vegetarian week or foster care fortnight in the UK is the 10th. Michelle, you know, everybody can share a veggie meal, you know,

[\(13:25\)](#):

I think great for the pubs. You know, even those of the pubs who may be still aren't open by then. Some won't be, but if they're doing takeaways and they want to have a veggie takeaway, we can all do an alternative then brilliant. Tie it in with national walking month, you know, walking to the pub is this many steps so come and pick up. We always say, you don't have to jump on these dates and do every single one. And if you're quite clever about it, there's ways and means of maybe pulling some together.

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Absolutely. And talking about that, national apple pie day with world cocktail day, Dan, I hope you're listening on the 13th. I mean pie, apple pie and cocktails all at the same time, apple pie, cocktails, cocktails, cocktail pie, something, you could have a lot of fun with apple pies and cocktails.

[\(14:18\)](#):

16th, we've got wear purple for peace day, but also freelance heroes day. Now we didn't know who was starting off the freelance heroes day. And we just need to double check that it's about us as freelancers, self-employed, sole traders, whatever. But if that is that day, right, all Google it, everybody can find out, we should all be watching this. Nearly 99% of you, are freelancers, sole traders, whatever term you want to use. And if that is literally that day to celebrate, get on it, 16th of May.

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Definitely. And celebrate. If you've got people who, if you've got a VA, a graphic designer, your accountant, whoever works with you and supports you, or if you're one of those people and you've got self-employed clients and shout out about them or maybe do something like say, Hey, my freelance community, I haven't had a chance to see you all yet. Do you all want to get together and have a coffee or an ice cream or a walk and get a picture, a selfie of you all? Your little freelance community that supports your business. I don't have any staff, but quite a wide community of people who do support me. Some regularly, some semi-regularly. And some ad-hoc, but without them, I wouldn't manage.

[\(15:41\)](#):

And this is the thing. And this is a completely different conversation, but those of us with staff, Mint has staff now, which is brilliant, brilliant, brilliant, slightly weird, brilliant. You know, for the last however long, our entire supply chain has been our members, our self-employed colleagues and there's an awful lot of them. Right, right. So yeah, we might not have staff, but a dozen, maybe up to 20 people at some point, if we bought, sold, you know, and helped build Mint and it is just to be celebrated. Absolutely.

[\(16:11\)](#):

I'm just racing through because I didn't spot this one. So on the 20th it's accessibility awareness day. So then that's both very close to our Michelle. You know, accessibility means so many different things. It's not just about wheels on your chair. It's about so, so many different things. And I think also in a lot of

our members, a lot of our community, Michelle, accessibility awareness day is probably up there for so many of us. So from any angle, which angle would you talk about accessibility awareness?

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Well, I don't know. I think that it's quite frustrated me that I think that maybe some of the, certainly some of the big stores, their accessibility has become better during COVID when they've had to think about routes through shops and making things safer. And you know, like when you used to go in, I won't say the name of it, but one of our bigger supermarkets in our town, you went in one door and came out the other. Now you can go in any door, any door. And it's just like you, just like, I was anxious yesterday coming out because I was trying to get out and there was people coming at me all ways, and you get a sense of what must it be like if you use a wheelchair or you walk with a stick or you're partially sighted? Is that how you feel all of the time?

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I think as well for me it's is everything you do online accessible? We talk a lot about this. Dean we'll give you a shout out, Dean Reynolds. You know he's an accessibility expert from personal experience, you know, is the stuff that you're doing online accessible as well? So there's loads of different angles, we can go on for hours. We'll not. Please, please put that one in there.

[\(18:04\)](#):

International Tiara day. We've all got a tiara.

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I think mine's downstairs right now.

[\(18:19\)](#):

That's on the 24th, along with world turtle day. 28th is international day of action for women's health. Again, something that you and I could go on for forever. So everybody, everybody on the planet who has a female, or is female, or just identify as either but who knows a female. Right? Okay. International day of action for women's health is something we all need to talk about. Would you agree?

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Whether it's physical health or mental health and we've talked every month about having a theme. And it may be if your business is, if you support a lot of women in your business and your business is something to do with their health, with their mental health. And yeah, there's, there's, there's so much you can do with that, you know, and you can do things really subtly without taking advantage of it. And actually really it could be, you could talk about content if this is women's mental health, do a blog series this month. Interview some of your clients, bring them on, see, you know, what you can do.

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And all you've got to say is as this month is, or at the end of this month, it's international day of women's health, I'm going to do, I'm going to interview one customer a week or whatever it is. So again, whatever we suggest, you take it, be creative, put your own spin on it, make it yours, use the hashtag so that you get a chance to be found by new people. And, you know, you've got nothing to lose and potentially some great stuff to gain.

[\(20:02\)](#):

Absolutely. So just to round up, on the 31st, bank holiday, it's actually national barbecue week as well. I mean, there's one for tying two things together. How many people could actually share a picture of a barbecue, some kind of notion of a barbecue on the bank holiday? Seriously, is that not what we do? It's raining and then it's 10 degrees, but it's bank holiday so we've got to have a barbecue.

[\(20:25\)](#):

Yeah. You can just, you can smell it usually can't you? By about 11 o'clock, someone's got their barbecue on, but this year it'll be even more important because if we, if we end up where we started and I know this has been a slightly maybe different video to normal, but we started talking about opening up, coming together, community, you know, sometimes we just share a soggy burger with each other on bank holiday Monday because we feel like we have to. But this year, whatever the weather, we're going to want to, and if you are a butchers or a greengrocers or a baker, you know, what can you do to help people and help them plan and help have a brilliant time and bring people together? Who in your community can you work with to put hampers together? Again, plan ahead. Plan ahead. Yeah. There's so much you can do.

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Okay. All right. Well, we'll leave you with that. A bit of a different one, I think we just really want to encourage people to jump on the content plan. No matter how busy you are, just don't forget to do it. And it's the doing it that matters right? Doing it, talking about it. Just one thin. Watching us is one thing, but it's the actual act of putting that stuff out there that gets the return for you all.

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So thank you so much for watching, wherever you are. As always, drop me and Michelle an email.

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We're loving the feedback. Because we've gone over, I'm going to go over a little bit more and we won't do this for June. We'll be on our 15 minutes. I promise. But you know, there's been some months when it's been quite tricky for me and Nic to fit this in, you know, and you think, Oh, it doesn't, it doesn't take much, but we have to record it. It's got to be edited. Then it's got to go out in the Nic's blog, I write my sort of content to go with it, but we've stuck with it. And people are now asking us when it's coming out and I've had people say, Oh, it was too, you know, people might say, they'll watch April in June. Cause they just find us in June and go, I've already put that in my diary for 2022. So, you know, this is being consistent as well. And just try and because, Hey, this isn't perfect, but we're having a good time and we're helping people. And sometimes that's as much as you can do, give it a go, help people do it from the heart and it, it all works.

[\(22:44\)](#):

That's what it's about. Okay. I will see you all next month in June. Month six, halfway through the year. No way. Okay. See you later.