

Empowering platform Kossie uses agility to overcome COVID-19

Founded two years ago by Karen Chung, Kossie now has offices in London, Hong Kong and New York City, building connections with its readers, supporting with articles and guides related to mental health, wellbeing, career and life balance.

Temps de lecture : minute

9 June 2020

The media regularly covers interviews of industry leaders and well-known "power couples" from the entrepreneurial ecosystem. One such article looked at the difficulties of falling in love as an LGBTQ+ couple in a conservative culture, bringing the media's highest engagement figures in 2019.

Trusting your gut

Unfortunately in 2019, Kossie was hacked while the team was switching the third-party to host the domain. The third-party tried their best to recover the site but they ended up losing a month of content while transitioning.

"I literally lost it and started screaming my lungs out... I have always been a tech noob and obviously forgot the importance of backing up all the files as double insurance on our end. Anything

related to website maintenance is definitely not my strongest suit, so what I've learned from this is that you have to be patient and hire the right company to do the right job. Trust your gut feeling! When you feel you have hired the wrong company to do the job, you will constantly feel discomfort."

Following this tech disaster, combined with the pressure of growing the business, Karen suffered what is now well-known as a burnout late last year.

"My expectations of our business growth turned out to be a bit slower than I expected. I beat myself up over this on this after a potential investor bailed out at very last-minute. I had a huge burnout; I took it very personally and it was really hard."

Now, following a period of self-reflection and throwing herself into mindfulness and meditation, Karen keeps a close eye on her own mental health when growing the business to make sure a burnout does not happen again. She also shares tips and guides with the audience who may also suffer from similar challenges.

COVID-19 impact

Since the impact of COVID-19, the website traffic has hit over 190% in MOM growth rate (avg. MOM growth rate: 46.3%), giving the team a little

bit of light and pride in the midst of a difficult situation. The audience is currently continuously looking for coronavirus-related articles, despite readers wanting articles on information detoxes or ending digital distractions. To that extent, the editorial line must be as relevant to the audience's current emotional state and interests as possible.

Sweeping changes imply the team having to pause all interview pieces with founders and entrepreneurs since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Instead, Kossie is working with Career, Money and Lifestyle coaches, as well as writing useful articles and guides to help its audience thrive amid the current climate.

“This what our audience wants to see from us - a holistic approach to easing negative thoughts, emotions and habits, and also, more user-generated content such our Fear Journals which allow our readers to tell us, and others, exactly how they are feeling. I’m lucky that we are a digital business so that we are able to continue to grow. However, one of the main concern that we have is that we just can’t foresee when the global pandemic is going to end.”

To survive the sudden changes, the team at Kossie works on a two-week schedule, with an ability to change and execute on short notice the required tasks every week.

Steady growth at the right pace

The strategies that Karen usually advises to other businesses to ensure growth at the right pace will reflect on their team performance and enable them to not make the same mistake twice. For Karen, it is essential that Kossie's vision and goals should be clearly defined over the next three to five years to keep everything measurable and improve team performance week on week.

“I think it would be a mistake to put everything on hold because of COVID-19. I have seen some of my start-up founder friends struggling to survive during this time because they thought it would ‘blow over’. Everything is evolving so quickly and we sometimes get lost but this is why we need a clear direction, with room to pivot the business if necessary.”

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