



# **JIM HARSHAW, JR.**

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*Clarity of Action. Peace of Mind.*

Success for the Athletic-Minded Man Podcast  
Action Plan Episode #501  
**Luke Peters**

Everyone wants an 8-figure exit... until they realize what it actually takes.

Luke Peters accomplished the exit and shares what he'd do differently.

He started out making 25 cents an hour in his family's donut shop. He barely scraped through high school, became a hazardous waste scientist, and then he spotted a strange little opportunity online: portable air conditioners.

Most people would've shrugged it off. Luke leaned in.

Fast forward a few years, he's running an \$80M company, built from scratch, with zero investors.

You know those stories where someone "falls into success"? This isn't that. Luke earned every inch. And in this episode of "Success for the Athletic-Minded Man," he breaks down exactly how he did it.

We dive into how he bootstrapped his business, scaled smart (without losing his mind), and built a team that made his company sellable— a crucial move for anyone eyeing an exit.

You'll hear why most entrepreneurs are stuck at 5% margins, how Luke used SEO to cash flow from day one, and the difference between grinding and unfocused grinding.

This is the stuff no one tells you, but everyone wishes they knew sooner. Tune in now. You're gonna want a notebook for this one!

## Top Quotes From This Episode

*"Most people never start because they overthink. But the truth is— your business is going to change anyway."*

*"Everybody should have a plan, and it doesn't need to be very complicated."*

## Show Notes

**This episode touches on the following key topics and ideas:**

- **[Share this episode! \(2:21\)](#)**: Share the podcast on social media by tagging me and using the hashtag #SAMpod:
  - **YouTube:** [@jimharshaw1](#)
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  - **LinkedIn:** [Jim Harshaw, Jr.](#)
- **The Journey to an \$80M Exit (2:49)**: Luke didn't study business— he studied microbiology and worked for the Department of Toxic Substances. But when he saw his younger brother making money online, he dove into SEO, found that portable air conditioners were trending, and jumped in.
- **Early Days, Grit, and Chaos (5:41)**: From working out of his condo and meeting customers in parking lots to moving into his mom's garage with his wife and kids, Luke shares what it really takes in the early hustle phase. No investors, no fancy tech, just relentless execution.
- **"America is made for business" (9:32)**: Luke explains why everyone should consider starting a business, even as a side hustle. Tax advantages, wealth-building, and freedom all start with ownership.
- **Great Businesses to Start Today (!)**: Product businesses still win— especially with niche audiences and tight brand control. But services (like coaching or consulting) work too if you narrow your focus and build a moat. Luke shares how he only works with founders preparing for an exit.
- **How a Logistics Fail Taught Him to Lead (16:43)**: A disastrous warehouse move nearly cost Luke major retail accounts. This triggered his realization: if you're serious about scale, you need a professional leadership team.
- **OKRs + MITs = Strategic Clarity (19:30)**: Luke uses OKRs (Objectives & Key Results) and MITs (Most Important Things) to create structure, prioritize, and

make high-impact decisions: What's my goal? What does success look like? What are my 3 MITs for this week?

- **Avoiding Burnout with Deep Work (23:49):** Luke emphasizes deep work blocks (inspired by [Cal Newport](#)) to get more done in 5 hours than most people do in 10.
- **Fitness as Non-Negotiable (26:09):** Luke stayed fit throughout by prioritizing surfing and mountain biking. He didn't find time— he made time.
- **Advice to His Younger Self (28:02):** Luke would go back and say: get strategic earlier. Too many companies chase sales and end up with paper-thin margins. Instead, build margin into your model from day one.
- **What's an action item the listener can take in the next 24-48 hours? (30:01):** Start writing down ideas. Create a 30-minute daily window where you brainstorm, evaluate, and journal. After a few weeks, the ideas with legs will stick.

### **List of Resources Mentioned in the Episode**

["Erin Brockovich" \(film\)](#)

### **Other Episodes Referenced**

[#268 Deep Work, Digital Minimalism, and Doing Your Highest Value Work with Cal Newport](#)

### **Guest Website and Social**

**Luke Peters**

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

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