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| Samantha: | 00:05 | <p>Welcome to Process to Profitability. A podcast all about the tools and strategies you need to serve your clients and grow your small business. Hosted by me, Samantha Mabe of Lemon and the Sea. Join me as I chat with creative entrepreneurs and small business owners about how they built and grew their businesses and how you can do the same in a way that fits you. Let's get started. Welcome to Episode Four of Process to Profitability. Today I'm talking with Elise Crawford of Ringlet Studio, all about building a social media strategy with your dream clients in mind. Elise and I had a great conversation all about why businesses need social media strategy, how you can create content that your dream client is going to relate to, and how to avoid feeling overwhelmed by all of the different platforms and options there are out there. She gives us some great advice on creating a social media strategy that works for your business and helps you to grow and scale in a way that's really true to you.</p> |
| Samantha: | 01:02 | <p>Over the last five years, Elise has worked with countless businesses in the DC area to create stunning brand's digital marketing campaigns, websites, and social media portfolios. In the beginning of 2016, she began Ringlet Studio with the mission of empowering women entrepreneurs to be bold online. Elise graduated with a masters in communications from Johns Hopkins University. Her concentrations were in public and media relations and digital communications. She's lived in DC for the last eight years and is planning an August 2017 wedding with her college sweetheart. I hope you enjoy this episode with Elise and can use some of this information for your own social media.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Samantha: | 01:41 | <p>Hi everyone. I'm here today with Elise from Ringlet Studio and we are going to be talking all about building a social media strategy with your dream clients in mind. Hi Elise.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Elise:    | 01:51 | <p>Hi Samantha. How are you? Doing?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Samantha: | 01:53 | <p>Good. How are you?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Elise:    | 01:55 | <p>I'm good. I'm so excited to be on here and talking with you and talking all about social media strategy.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Samantha: | 02:00 | <p>Awesome. So why don't you get started by telling us a little bit about who you are, where you're from, and your business.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Elise:    | 02:08 | <p>Sure, so I'm Elise Crawford. I am CEO and director of Ringlet Studio. We're a digital marketing agency based here in</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

Washington, DC. And we work with women entrepreneurs and business owners to help them become more visible online. So we work with everyone from florists, to authors, to wedding planners. But our specialty really is in digital marketing, so what that encompasses is email marketing, social media strategy, advertisements on strategy and getting down and dirty and talking about how you can gain clients and more business through your online presence. I still live in DC. I've been here for about eight years. I went to Catholic University and then went on to get my master's at Johns Hopkins in communications. While at Hopkins I had an internship with an agency called Appleseed Communications. They're based in New York and they are a PR firm. They are a startup and they work with women entrepreneurs. I just loved the fast paced life of the startup world.

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| Elise:    | 03:20 | And after that experience, I wanted to start my own business. My dad is a lawyer and has had his own law firm for 25 years. So it was also growing up with a father as an entrepreneur that I knew that I eventually wanted to start my own business, but it was in my experience with Appleseed Communications that it was kind of solidified. So after I finished my master's, I worked a little bit in non-profit communications and then about a year and a half ago I took the leap and started running the studio. I followed my dreams of helping women really scale their businesses.                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Samantha: | 03:57 | Awesome. So we are talking about social media strategy and why that's so important. So why do small businesses like ours and like the people listening need a social media strategy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Elise:    | 04:13 | Yeah. So this is going to be fun. I'm really, I mean the social media, it's really important.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Elise:    | 04:21 | I want to put it out there first and foremost, it's not the end all be all people get really flustered when it comes to social media strategy and they're like, oh my gosh, I just don't know where to start. I have a few photos but I don't have professional photos or maybe do you have professional photos that you have too many photos? You just don't know how to organize it, but it doesn't really have to be complicated. My main thing that I tell clients is that social media and your marketing really can be simple and still really effective. So, the reason people need a social media strategy is because it fits in with the whole marketing strategy that you need for your business. Social media is kind of like the branches of your strategy. So I talk about marketing as it's like a tree. |

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| Elise:    | 05:10 | If your blog on your website is kind of like the trunk of the tree where people go to find out more information about you to contact you. Social media is kind of like the branches. Social media reaches out into the depths of the Internet and pulls people back to your website. They pull you back to your contact page and it also engages people. It roots your business because you are able to grow a community around your business and your brand, and really interact with people in a meaningful way. So social media can be really powerful. I think we're going to delve a little more into what that strategy could look like.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Samantha: | 05:49 | Yeah. So I know that a lot of people really struggle being visible on social media and I think that's because we feel like we're shouting into this void of trying to talk to everybody. How can we sort of get into talking to your dream client, figuring out where they are and how to connect with them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Elise:    | 06:12 | So I made this mistake in the beginning of my business. Fun fact I actually started Ringlet a few months before Ringlet Studio came to be. At first Ringlet was actually Ringlet Media and it was great, it was just one of those first stages of business where you are just testing things out. I kind of offered everything to everyone. I was like, I'll build your website, and I'll do strategy with you, and I'll do social media. And I quickly found out that that did not work. And the biggest lesson there was I actually just sit down and talk to my prospective clients. I kind of came up with this whole social media plan, this whole set of services and then realized that no one really was interested in them or really needed them or it really confused them, I'm not sure exactly which one, but maybe a combination of all that.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Elise:    | 07:11 | I think when you're sitting down to start out making a social media strategy, actually sit down and talk with people who are already following you on social media, ask them what do you like about my profile? What do you like about following me? I know it doesn't have to be anything super confrontational, it can be someone that you know pretty well in social media. Just have an honest conversation with them about your social media, like what they like, what they don't like, what would be more helpful, and ask someone who's going to be honest. You don't want to ask your mom or best friends. Ask someone who is going to be really helpful, and talk to that person who's already following you. Then talk to someone who is like your dream client and that might be scary, but one of my biggest achievements in my first year of business was just reaching out. Cold emailing, reaching out to people who I really loved on social media, and asking them for their feedback, asking them for what they're looking for, what they think I can offer, really |

getting into your zone of genius and nearing in on that one thing that you have to offer that no one else can offer. When we are shouting into the void, I think it's because we think that our voices are getting lost. And in order to your voice not to get lost, you need to actually hone in on what your voice is. Actually hone in on who am I, what's the one thing or two things that I have to offer that's really special? And don't be intimidated by that question. You really do have something special to offer. Your voice is unique. It's special. I don't want to go into too much of this special snowflake scenario, but you really are. Something I tell my clients is you are unique. You are unique, you have something special to offer and no one else can take that away from you and you're the only one that can speak to your clients in the way that you can.

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| Samantha: | 09:13 | Do you find that that is easier after you've started working with clients to sort of figure out who your dream client is or can you do that before you really found those people in your business?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Elise:    | 09:27 | I think there's a balance. I definitely was conscious the first year in business that there were going to be clients that I was just working with to really learn my skills were in the process and just kind of ran with it. But then there were also clients that I knew these are dream clients. I really wanted to work with them and I think like any business, you're not going to hit it off the bat right away. I am a strong believer in the fact that there's no such thing as failure is all just trial and error and an opportunity to learn. I think there is a way you can go about it strategically and be smart about it. |
| Elise:    | 10:07 | But if anyone has done business perfectly, right off the bat, please contact me because I'm not sure if there's anyone out there. If you are, please, contact me because I want to talk to you. But, I don't think it's going to be perfect right off the bat, but you can be strategic about working with your first clients even.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Samantha: | 10:27 | Now. What would you say to the people who feel like they have to be everywhere on social media? I feel like there are new platforms coming out every day and we feel like we have to be everywhere so that we can just get found online. How do we figure out where it is that we should actually be putting our effort?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Elise:    | 10:46 | I think a lot of people leap into business and are just like, OK, I have this service and I'm just going to put it out there. Which is great, but you have to go about a strategically. And so what I mean by going about something strategically is taking a step                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

back, thinking about your zone of genius, thinking about, OK, what are, what's the one or two things that I want to say specifically to my clients? So for Ringlet Studio, we say that marketing can be simple, effective, and profitable. Those are three ways that we approach marketing. And we talk about that all the time throughout our social media, throughout our website, throughout our blog. People start to recognize those three adjectives as something that belongs to Ringlet Studio marketing. Be strategic about how you're talking about your services, how you're labeling them. From there, you can think about how each social media platforms helps to, boost that messaging. So, if you have a business about video, video marketing, you're going to be on YouTube.

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| Elise:    | 11:53 | If you have a more visual based business, you're going to want to be on Instagram. If you feel really comfortable getting in front of video, start going on Facebook Live. I truly believe that video is the next wave of the future on the Internet. I really think in the next like 10 years that our whole Internet base is just going to be completely video. I think if you feel comfortable, start getting in front of the camera. That's one of my big recommendation for everyone. The way you find out what platforms specifically fit your business is by testing them out. Test out Facebook Live, test out Instagram videos, test out Twitter and find out what is going to be best for your business, where you get the most traction, where you feel comfortable. I think, like you said, a lot of people feel like they have to be everywhere. I strongly believe in just picking two platforms, Facebook and Instagram or Instagram and Twitter, whatever you feel comfortable with, because the reality is if you hate Instagram, you're not going to post on there. Why force yourself to do that when you don't like it and you thrive on Facebook Live, so don't force yourself to do something you really hate. |
| Samantha: | 13:12 | I think it's really important that you pointed out the video as being the next big thing. That is where I think all of the platforms are going. They're offering video now, especially Facebook Live. There's also this big push to getting more behind the scenes with Instagram stories and Facebook just came out with a stories something. So we are really getting into this era where video is big and we're getting to see a little bit of the behind the scenes. The mess behind our businesses is a thing instead of looking perfect all the time.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Elise:    | 13:50 | Yeah, no definitely. I think people crave buying from people. I think that is why big brands like Kate Spade and J Crew are in trouble, honestly. They're like millions of dollars in debt because they represent these big brands, that kind of have this face on.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

They present catalogs and websites and pictures that are just like perfect, you know, to have this perfect world, these perfect products. And people are like, I'm done with that. You know, they want to buy from brands like Everlane or their friends who are starting Kickstarter campaigns because they crave personal connection. You know, they want to buy from people who they feel a personal connection with. So the more you can put yourself out there in your business, to be the face of your business, you know, there's, there's a difference. I even struggle with this, Ringlet Studio is not [elisecrawford.com](http://elisecrawford.com).

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| Elise:    | 14:47 | I'm really trying to build up a creative agency. So there is a difference between being the face of your business, putting yourself out there and then also letting your team put their faces out there. I think that that's a whole other strategy that we'd have to go into, but I'm putting the face, behind the scenes, of your brand out there. It's a strength. It strengthens your brand and helps people connect with you and feel like they're part of your brand story.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Samantha: | 15:14 | So how do you help your clients stay consistent on social media?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Elise:    | 15:22 | The main way is through editorial calendars. They are my jam. When a person comes to me and needs help with social media, we sit down and we not only create strategy for them, but we also then create an editorial calendar to implement that strategy. The editorial calendar is simply a calendar where each platform, social media platform is listed and then each post that is meant to go out for each day of that month, is listed on each platform. So, say for May ninth, I'll have under May 9th, Facebook, Instagram, and blog, and it will tell me what post is meant to go out on each platform for that day. So that helps my clients become a lot more consistent. It takes the overwhelm out of posting, and it helps them feel really competent and putting themselves out there because they know that their messaging and strategy is in place, that their images and their captions are strong, and they don't have to wake up and think, oh my gosh, what am I going to post on social media? And they get flustered because they're missing you at the time that they're meant to be posting. And they're going to get the highest engagement. So anyway, it's just really helpful to stay consistent and then I also use several tools. We use HootSuite, we use Sprout Social. Those are some of my favorite platforms for social media posting. And then also looking at analytics. I love Gary B who says one of the biggest missed opportunities with marketing is looking at your analytics. So through Sprout Social we take a look at our clients social media analytics every |

single day, every single week, every month. So we're keeping track of when people are engaging the most, what posts are doing well, that is one of the biggest strategies that we offer our clients. The most helpful things that we offer them is just actually keeping track of their analytics, and being strategic about using those analytics enough. But if you're not using your analytics, if you're not actually taking a look at how people are interacting with you, you are missing a huge opportunity. So, that's one of the big ways that we stay strategic and stay consistent with our social media.

Samantha: 17:44 OK. Do you recommend that we schedule everything in advance or is there a balance with like scheduling things in advance and then posting things as they happen so that we can be a little bit more real?

Elise: 17:57 Yeah, I think there's a balance. I do schedule things five days a week just so that I feel comfortable knowing that something is going to go up for my clients, we schedule five, six days a week and I know my team is going to put that content out there, but then it also gives our clients an opportunity on the weekends and throughout the day to post. We post one time a day, maybe they want to post. If we post in the morning maybe they want to post in the evening. It gives them opportunity to do that if they want. But there's a balance, you know, you want your platforms to look consistent and to stay on brand. So I really discourage people from, you know, we're working on this amazing beautiful platform and profile on Instagram. And then you post a picture you really like, like a cat in the evenings, with like dark shadows. And I'm like, no, this not on-brand, I'm not saying that picture. If you want to share pictures of your kids, sure, go ahead. But, you have to make sure that we're being intentional about what's going up on your social media and you don't want it to sling anything out there.

Samantha: 19:15 I think a lot of it is so visual that if you want to share a picture of your cat on social media, go ahead, but make sure it's a good picture, on brand that's not going to stand out and be the only thing people notice.

Elise: 19:33 Exactly. And I think that's one of the benefits of Facebook Live and Instagram stories is that people don't expect those to be branded or beautiful or you know, they're a little more raw. So if you'd want to share a picture of your family on a Saturday afternoon, you can put it up there. It's not there forever and it's not messing up the flow of your brand.

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| Samantha: | 19:56 | So how do you then use social media to convert your audience into, people who are visiting your website and eventually into potential clients?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Elise:    | 20:07 | <p>It's all about relationships. I've had a lot of people reach out through Instagram and Facebook. "I'm seeing that I've been following you forever, and I just finally wanted to take the plunge into working with you." I have seen a lot of that happening with my clients too, where we work on their social media and then they finally start seeing results. I had a friend who or a client who had a magazine reach out to them and decided to feature them because of what we've been posting on their social media. And so the key is just one consistency. But then also reaching out to other people, reaching out to big brands through social media and saying, "Hey, I love, you. Just want to say that I really admire your product or really admire your brand" or even posting about them. That's a big way to grow your brand visibility. But in specifically converting clients, it's consistency in posting. And then being really intentional about when you are launching, I was just listening to a podcast about launching. You really want to provide your clients with value and then when you are launching, make sure you are posting on your social media about the launch. Make sure that you are being intentional about when you're talking about, hey, I have a new product or I have a sale on a service. Just be intentional about when you're sharing that you don't want to just be talking about that all the time. The biggest converter in social media is value; is providing potential clients with a taste of what you can offer them, a taste of the lifestyle that you offer them. If you're a product-based business, what kind of lifestyle your product can provide or how your product can improve the person's life. How your service can improve on your client's life. In grad school they would say, people actually need to see an ad at least seven times before they're converted. When you're launching, go for it. Talk about that service a lot for a whole week or the product. Talk about it all the time. Then take a break and talk about your life, talk about the behind the scenes of your business and offer free value and offer your expertise. You know, like I mentioned earlier, you have something to offer that no one else can offer in this world and you need to talk about that on your social media, you know, and that's how you're going to convert people is offering them value that no one else can.</p> |
| Samantha: | 22:47 | And I think a lot of it, especially on social media, we get a chance to let people get to know us as people. And so that's important too. It's not always about business, but it's about, this is what I'm doing in my life and you don't have to share                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |

everything, you know, don't share things you're not comfortable with, but you do want to let people know I'm a real person and this is what I value in my life because that's what people are going to connect with more than just a product or a service.

- Elise: 23:16 My fiancé always jokes with me because I don't post about him often on my personal Instagram, but when I do, I get the most interactions and likes. And he's like, I'm your token, you know, guy who increases engagement. When these people just love, love stories and seeing people in love and engagement. So weddings and blah blah blah. So it's just about you, but I don't share too much about my personal life, but just letting people know where you are, sharing your journey with them. You know, I think as creative entrepreneurs, we think that we have to put up a front and be like, I have this altogether and look at the six figure launch that I just created and oh my gosh, my children are so well behaved and I have a perfect wardrobe. There's definitely a temptation to think that way. But in reality people just connect with your journey. You know, when you share how you're growing your business, the mistakes that you've made, and how you're learning. People connect a lot more with that.
- Samantha: 24:20 OK. So did you have anything else you wanted to share about social media strategy?
- Elise: 24:28 Sure. If you are just starting a business and getting things off the ground, the biggest recommendation I can give you is to just delve in and don't be afraid to just try things out. Like you said, there are always new platforms coming out but it doesn't mean you have to hop on board, stick with the two platforms that you best connect with your audience and just go hard. Just really throw your whole energy and strategy into it. And don't be afraid to put yourself out there. I think a lot of people are afraid to put their face on video. They are afraid to put themselves out there, but don't be, like I said, just be confident in knowing that you are unique and that you really do have something to offer people that only you can do.
- Samantha: 25:19 So I always ask people these couple of questions at the end of an interview. So why has serving your clients well been such an important part of your business?
- Elise: 25:31 It's really goes back to my why. I know as business owners, we talk about our why a lot. Find your why. And I think it seems a lot like really out there for some people and they just have a hard time, at least I know I had a hard time connecting with that idea of my why in the beginning. I don't know. I just need to

make money. I don't know why why. As business progressed, I really did find that my why, the purpose of my business was there really all along and it just needed to be cultivated. I think your why changes throughout your years in business as well. Really my reason for starting Ringleet, for going into business was the fact that I wanted to empower women to help them become, I don't want to say become visible online because it feels like a, I don't want to seem like a catchphrase, but what I mean by that is being a part of their success and the fact that I get to be a part of making her dreams a reality, oh my gosh, that's like, it's amazing. It makes me feel like I'm actually working for something bigger than myself. If you just go into business for yourself it gets really boring really fast. If you have a purpose in a mindset that you were really meant to serve other people and I truly believe we're all meant to hold each other up to support one another and to empower one another. And if you're doing that in your business, you're on the right track, you know. I think it's really important to have that servant mindset.

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| Samantha: | 27:19 | Tell me two things that you're loving right now and they can be business or life.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Elise:    | 27:24 | OK, well I'm going to be cliché and say it is peonies because I'm staring at my desk right now, my fiancé and I celebrated seven years of been together last weekend and he got me peonies and they're sitting at my desk and just breathing up my morning. So they are one of the things that I'm loving right now. The other thing I'm loving right now is an app called people map and it's the Instagram app that helps you create affiliate marketing campaigns. We've been doing affiliate marketing for one of our clients recently, which is connecting our client who is a brand with Instagram influencers. So that app, PeopleMap has been really instrumental in helping us do that leading into the world of affiliate marketing has been really fun. |
| Samantha: | 28:14 | So what are you excited for that's coming up in the future in your business maybe that you're working on or you're going to launch soon?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Elise:    | 28:21 | Sure. So I am going to do online classes and offering a couple of free webinars and classes on social media and email marketing and strategy. So stay tuned and that should be coming out by the end of the month.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Samantha: | 28:45 | OK. And then where can people find you online?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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| Elise:    | 28:49 | Yeah, you can go to Instagram at <a href="#">ringletstudio</a> and at <a href="#">elisecrawford</a> . Then you can go into <a href="#">what studio.com</a> and find all of our amazing resources for not getting in life as an entrepreneur. Um, we also are on Facebook as Ringlet Studio. |
| Samantha: | 29:09 | All right, awesome. And I will share all of that in the show notes so people can check them out. So thank you so much for joining me today and talking about this.                                                                                                                          |
| Elise:    | 29:19 | Yeah, it's been fun. Thanks Samantha. I am so excited for your new endeavor here. And I'm really happy to be part of it.                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Samantha: | 29:29 | Thanks for listening to Process to Profitability. Please take a minute to leave an honest review on iTunes so that I can help more small business owners and creative entrepreneurs find the show.                                                                                          |