

PLEASE NOTE: This is a machine transcription. Some punctuation and spelling weirdness are to be expected.

If you've listened to the podcast before or you've followed me for any length of time, you may have heard me say something like this. My first tip for standing out in a crowded niche is to create your own content. This is a hill that I will die on. Do not let someone else or something else create your content for you. And if you have, then today's episode is probably going to come as a shock. This is episode 137 of the Tiny Course Empire podcast, and today I've invited a special guest to talk to us. I first learned about him through a forum that he and I both belong to. We've had a little interaction there i have watched some of his conversations over there and he is known as the bottleneck guy, and what he does is useful to all of us who own businesses he is a business consultant who helps corporations and even solopreneurs identify the places and the processes in their business where they are constrained, where they are not able to scale or grow because of some bottleneck that we often don't even recognize. Now, that alone is interesting enough, but that's not why I invited him to come on the podcast today. I invited him to come on the podcast today because he is also an author. He writes very engaging books about bottlenecks in business, and his latest book, which I read and which I absolutely loved, was written using AI. And we already know how I feel about that and I know how some of you feel about that. So I was really excited when Clark Ching told me that he would come on the podcast and tell us all about the process that he used to write a really engaging, really useful, really informative book with the help of chat GPT and claude. So I hope that you will enjoy this conversation as well. As always, the show notes, the recommended resources and contact information for Clark will be in the description below or at TinyCourseEmpire.com/137. Don't forget to subscribe because that makes sure that every new episode lands in your inbox or in your podcast app of choice and you never miss anything. With that out of the way, let's get to our interview with Clark

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO START, GROW, AND SCALE YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS

50+
COURSES



600+
MEMBERS

START YOUR \$7 TRIAL

Welcome, Clark. I am so excited to have you on the podcast today. I, the people who know me, know that I love two things. I love systems in business and I love to write. And I strongly dislike AI as a content creation machine, which is part of the reason why I invited you here. But we're going to get to that in a minute because I want to talk about how you're using AI because I'm super impressed with it. But first, I want to know, I want my audience to know more about you and what you do because there's a lot of, let's call it synergy between what you do and kind of what I teach my audience as well in terms of systems and being more efficient at work, which is what what drew me to you in the 1st place actually, my first, my first introduction to you was through your book *The Bottleneck Rules*. And I read that it was, I found it incredibly engaging, really entertaining and informative, which is hard to pull off. So I appreciate your writing style in that way. And I learned a lot through that book and mostly I learned that, and this is not anything I didn't know, but you know, my biggest bottleneck stares back at me from the mirror every day, which is, you know, just the way it goes when you're a small business owner, I guess but so tell me about what you do and and who you work for and and and what this what this bottleneck what, what this bottleneck guy persona is all about?

Clark

Right OK so I'm Clark Ching. I live in New Zealand. I grew up in New Zealand but I moved away in my twenties to live in Scotland and Ireland. So I learned a few more vowels when I did that and I came back here and tried to spread them around New Zealand, but they haven't really stuck. So living in Nelson, New Zealand, I have, I'm in my mid fifties now and for most of my early career I was a computer scientist and then a, a programmer and all of that kind of stuff. And then in the mid nineties I discovered that a book I think is absolutely wonderful and it changed my life but it's very hard to recommend it these days because it's quite dated which is a business novel called The Goal by Ellie Goldratt and it's it is a it's a, it's a full blown novel it's actually quite, it's a very engaging but sometimes confusing read and it teaches the idea of how to find bottlenecks in in factories. So I became utterly, utterly enamoured with with with bottlenecks. But it took me probably maybe 15 years before I realized I was actually quite good at that stuff. And I had transplanted a lot of the bottleneck thinking into two areas. One was software development, commercial software development, and that's my speciality these days i don't work with teams i work with leaders and executives, senior managers who are often, when they wake up in the morning and they look in the mirror, they're actually the bottleneck of the organization. So I help those people. And the other area I help is that I loved the, the, the theory of constraints, which is the, the name of the bottleneck stuff. But just so much of the stuff that came out about it was, it was very sort of nineteen seventies nineteen, eighties scientifically written. And it became very, very hard for normal people to access it. You know, it was very hard to say, Hey, look, you know, you probably have a problem, but you have to go and read this 400 and something page book from the nineteen eighties. It just you know, it just didn't work so I've kind of if I have a mission in life is to be to be simplified to to to simplify and modernize Ellie gold dress work, which is why I've written my my books it just takes that I I really have cherry picked as work and just tried to simplify it so ordinary people can, can, can go go with that and speed up their businesses by finding the, the, the bottleneck. So that that's my history.

Cindy

I found the bottleneck rules to be very, very approachable, very understandable as a layperson i didn't feel like I needed, you know, a background in manufacturing or, or anything like that i have a background in manufacturing, but it, it didn't, didn't come into play. You know, it wasn't a required, a prerequisite for understanding the, the, the finer points of, of what you were trying to get at in that book, which is why I found it so fascinating like I said, it was so engaging. It reads like a novel and and it was just, it wasn't like one of those boring, you know, business productivity books like like you just drag through it, right and you're just skimming over it because I just it was, it was really engaging so it's just so much easier.

Clark

To read, Isn't it when you read a story?

Cindy

So much easier to read.

Clark

Olden It's harder to write a story.

Cindy

Yeah.

Clark

It's much easier to sit down and go bang, bang, bang, bullet points there you go. That's everything I know. It's much harder story that that that does capture people and, and pull them in because it's interesting. But it pays off though, because if you write it once and thousands of people read it, it's a, it's a really, you know, it's just a magnificent, magnificent thing i'm not sure how many books you've got or audio books where you've maybe got the first two or three chapters read and then you just go, oh, I can't do any more, but I know it would be good for me. You know, it's like eating vegetables.

Cindy

There are so many books. You know, I have, I have a bookshelf sitting over here and I have so many books on there that are partially read, you know, books that come highly recommended. Flow is one of them. I cannot get through that book to save my life. Just it is so dense and and it makes me feel stupid to read it because I'm just like, I don't get this. I've read the same page four times i don't know what he's saying i'm done. And so so your style of writing was so beneficial.

Clark

Oh, cool thank you. I'm glad you like that.

Cindy

Yeah, So what i'm sorry I interrupted you what were you saying i.

Clark

Was just going to say, some people, I used to go to conferences a lot for my work and you go to conferences And I remember sitting there thinking, I'm quite intelligent and I just watched, you know, a keynote, but I didn't have a clue what

that guy said. And everyone else was sitting there nodding and smiling. And I thought, I'm probably at least as intelligent as half of them, you know, statistically speaking. And I'm pretty sure that none of them except maybe five people knew it. And, but, but you can't pretend to be you you feel dumb. You can't confess that. And yet the, the, I remember one guy in particular, he walked away and he was beaming and everyone was nodding and, and feeling like they were all really stupid. And I don't think he meant to, you know, achieve that. But he never got the signals back that he was actually just confusing people. And then you get some other people who do that deliberately so that you you, you go spend a lot of money with.

Cindy

Them right, because they they need to make themselves feel smarter. Yeah, yeah, I think that's by making everyone in the room feel dumb.

Clark

Indeed.

Cindy

But your book made me feel smart because I understood it and I enjoyed it and I thought, Oh yeah, this is this is amazing. Then I ran into you. Actually, I ran into you again in this book. Surprisingly, yes, which is for people listening instead of watching the video, Simple Marketing by Simple Marketing for Smart People by Billy Bro Oz, I don't know how to pronounce his last name, and Thiago Forte. And I came across you the second time in this book so we met first of all on the Mac Power Users forum that's where I ran into you that's where I found out about your book, The Bottleneck Rules and I tracked down your website and got on your mailing list and downloaded it there and then I ran into you the second time in that book, and I thought, that's a sign and then you posted again on the Mac Power Users forum, where we both hang out about how you had written a new book.

What's it called?

Clark

The bottleneck detective.

Cindy

The Bottleneck Detective, which you were kind enough to send to me and which I read, it was fabulous again. But the reason why I wanted to get you on the podcast today is because you wrote that book with AI. And I want to talk about that. Excellent because I tell people all the time, don't write your content with AI, Don't want to read content you wrote with AI Think you owe your readers better than that. And I've taken quite a stand on that. But I read your book, The Bottleneck Detective, and it is good. So I want to talk to you about how you used AI to write that. Tell me, tell me all about it.

Clark

Ok, so I agree with you, or at least I did used to agree with you that the beautiful thing about AAI, if you're running a content firm, say, is that you don't have to hire people who live in poor countries to write you or rewrite you. Lots of low quality but higher quantity content. So that's a beautiful thing if you're just, if you're just tuning out loads and loads and loads of low quality content, suddenly you can get a little robot and your computer can write that for you and you've just got to write, type into it, write me a thing about blah, blah, blah. Go through, edit it ever so slightly and then pop it on your web page and then every single article you write, we'll start with something like, and these busy times when we're all, and they'll, you know, and they just go, you go, oh, and I and you, you can see it and it just doesn't feel like it's written by a craftsman who really loves what they're talking.

Cindy

About.

Clark

No, no. But then on the other hand, that that that in a way that's up to the game of a lot of people who can actually now write stuff that they couldn't before but I, I, I don't think that. So I, I couldn't do that because I'm a first of all, it just makes me a little bit of sick comes up at the back of my throat, you know, when I think about it yeah yeah. But then I'm a professional writer now and and as you are, you know, so many of us are I've I've written, I think I've got six books on Amazon now. And I've gone through 20 years, 25 years from being a really below where fridge writer to learning to be a good writer. So when I'm doing using AI, I'm not going to let it tarnish my reputation. I'm not going to let it i, I don't care about writing quantity. I want quality so I'm, I'm taking the dial and I'm turning it up to high on quality. And, and that, that's probably the difference. I know how to write well now, but it took an awful long time to get to that point and to when I'm using AI, I'm actually using it to make me a better, richer, more thoughtful, more well-rounded writer. And that requires an interaction between me, my fingertips, my brain, and at the moment to AI platform so I use chat GTP and I use Claude and I will move between them, but I'm orchestrating everything that I write and I'm doing a lot of fingertip work that there's a lot of editing going on there and a lot of toing and firing but then just sometimes chat GTP does stuff that just, it just lifts me up because it just, it just does the things that I, I'm not good at now i'll give you a few examples.

Cindy

Yes, please.

Clark

So with the bottleneck detective, I started kind of at the end of the writing, but the bottleneck detective, when I had written that, I took it and I sent it off. I looked and thought I, I, I, I don't need to go and get an editor because I, the, the, the way I wrote the book, I know it's good enough and I actually had my daughter's she, she, she just finishing her criminology masters so she edited it for me and provided me all the editorial feedback and I got everything then I got, that's good so I updated everything and then I passed it on to a proofreader and I paid, I'm not sure, three 400\$ she went through and she proofed it and I've done that in the past and she came back with, when I look at it, there were things like M dashes and stuff like that which I, I never can get them, you know, getting the comma in the right place, making sure it's got consistent, all of that stuff that I can't do. But she did really hardly any editing on it. It most of what she did was actually a proof with a few little tweaks because the quality of what I gave her, I had passed it through chat GTP and the writing was just really good. So I'd used it to make sure that the stuff that I wrote, I would I would just use I would to and fro between my editor. I'm sorry, my text editor that I'm writing in and I checked GTP or Claude and I'll just use it to make sure that the writing was it was good writing. So that was a really interesting thing that for proof, she passed a rise over it made a few corrections, but they were, I imagine it there was maybe I would guess one. Fiftieth oops, sorry i've just put a thumbs up on your screen. There is one maybe one fiftieth of the corrections needed from here. So that was really helpful but you know, you could do that with Grammarly and I'm not disciplined or skilled enough to do that myself and I'm happy to pay for it. So great, great. The AI just produced bit of writing some of the other areas that were really interesting and I'll stick with. So the bottleneck detective, I started that i said, right, I'll tell you what I didn't, I didn't say, hey, chat GTP, I want you to write me a book where it's about a bottleneck detective and, and, and he's a young kid, let's say, and he goes off and solves bottlenecks go write the book. And then it turned out a book and I published it i didn't do that. I went and said, hey, look, I really would like to write a really small book and I'd like to base it on some books i think I read a school teacher read to us in the seventies when I was a kid and they were, and I looked it up and they were Encyclopedia Brown, which I think it was for somehow that book made it to New Zealand and, and so I said I want to write a little story in the style of that because I'd like to teach people how to find bottlenecks. And by the way, the easiest way to find bottlenecks is to spot a, a queue. So a queue of people waiting so there's a line up of people waiting. You look at that and you can find a bottleneck. And then, and I said, you know, it's almost like if it was a detective novel, that would be the smoking gun. So that's all my thinking. I spit it into chat GTP and it writes a little story for me with that.

Eventually, after hours and hours and hours of editing, became the 1st chapter in The Bottleneck Detective. So it was all my ideas and I just asked to write a story and it put things that invented the name of the Starlight Cinema. And I go, wow, I would never invented the name of the character, which I think I changed. But it's just like this little story in the style of an encyclopedia, Brett Brown or Yeah and it just did that and then so I butchered and butchered and butchered that, you know, with my editing, with my fingertips and I've moved it round i got the story just like a that's a really good story. And then I let it rest for a while. And it had done something though that that was really hard for me, which is to write the first draft. Yeah and while I was then doing it, wrote the first draft and I went back and I edited and edited and edited it until it was, it was something that I felt like that's entirely me. And that's exactly what I wanted to say. And I think that's maybe where people, they might just take the first version of that, tweak it so slightly and then publish it. And maybe that's OK. But for me that that wasn't. And from then if, if for people who are thinking about what, what comes next, it's like, well, I thought actually, you know, I, I really just want to write. I want to get myself more practice and actually writing and producing small pieces. So I set up, I went to convert kit and I set up an email course and that 1st chapter became the first lesson, OK, And I thought, OK, and, and do you know Jack Reacher books, Lee Child's Jack?

Cindy

Reacher Big, big fan yeah.

Clark

So Lee Child's when he was still writing them, he would write the 1st chapter and he would get that right and then everything that came after that just just happened. He didn't plot it all out. And so I did the same with this i thought, OK, I'm going to do, I've done the first one, now I need to do the second chapter so I went back into chat, GTP started completely fresh, pasted in my story and said, I want this, but now I want the, the, the, the, the bottleneck to be there because this has happened. And then it wrote out a story and I go, oh, that's ghastly so I type in some stuff. Actually, no, no, that's not quite what I meant. And it writes something and it invents a new character. I go, oh, OK, that's actually quite good i maybe rename the character

name. But then I would pop in and I would take it and I would go in and with my own fingertips, I would go in and I would edit and edit and edit it's like, OK, that's good enough. And then OK, what happens next in the story and I'd figure that out. And then I'd paste in my second lesson than to chat, I'd paste both lessons and so this is what I got so far. The next bit I want is for the story to do this. And then it would spit out something and then I repeated and repeated and repeated. So, so that was to get an email course that eventually the, the main purpose of that was selfish and that I wanted to get something that I could actually, I put, I got people on the course and I wrote it two or three days ahead because I wanted to get my own momentum for writing up. And I got to the end of it go, wow, that's really good. But as I was doing that, people were giving me feedback about the, the content and I was writing that back and so, so you see here, I'm using chat GTP to do some stuff, but most of it's me doing and froing with it. And then once I've done that, I go, OK, I've got an email. Course and then just just wonder, I just thought it's a book that would be so much. It will hit more people and help more people if I can pop it on Amazon. So I took all the lessons, put it into, I think I probably swapped a claw just to see what it was like and it ran through and it just made suggestions on how I could change it. And then we just keep to and all of the suggestions I would keep in a master document and it would suggest something and then I'd go and cut and paste if I liked it and put it in. And then eventually I'd start a new chat and put the current state of the document in there. And I would rework and rework and rework. So now most people when they're doing this and writing a book, but, but This is why you have to like start fresh, put it in. And then then one thing that's really useful is I, I went and I said, actually, I want to write this. As you know, it's got to have a detective thing. And I've tried to write the story, but I'm like the master detective. What do you reckon I should do to this, Claude? And it said, why don't we? How about I rewrite the first chapter and I write an introduction from you and I write it like a, a detective. And it wrote it like a detective and it cringed because it was so cliched. I thought too much, it was just too much. And I said, can you dial it back quite a lot so and, and, and I said, here's the bottleneck rules the the book that you mentioned earlier, can, can you make it like that book can you read that? Tell me how I write, but just write it with a bit of detective stuff in it. And and so it went through and it just helped me just rewrite it with this kind of me as detective, not not Sam Spade, not Columbo, but me as detective and I read it and go, wow, that's definitely not how I would normally write, but it's totally right for a book about the a bottleneck detective. And then it went through and said, why don't we add in some detective rules? I go, oh, that's a really good idea so it started as it went through, it started inventing that would add a new detective wrong i'd look at them and go,

some of them are wow, that's really clever i never thought of that. And some of them are, Oh my goodness, that's like a, a greeting card Cliche. So I would take some of the ideas and I would add them in and then I'd the other ones I would just completely discard them. And then the last bit I'd tell you about the book that that was most useful is I had 1 chapter at the end of the bottleneck detective, which was me kind of writing a wrap up letter. And, and it's funny, actually, you mentioned Billy Bro S and his his book. I paid to go on couple of Billy's marketing messaging cohorts. And I also paid for quite a lot of consulting with him as well. And at the end of one of his cohorts, he sent out a letter to people saying, Hey, this is a wrap up of the course and here are the lessons that I thought you might have missed it you went along to the high level stuff. I wish you luck and it was and you get this, this unexpected email at the end of the course, you go, wow, that's just really lovely it's it's like wisdom, you know, just arrived in my email. Box and so I took that and I said, hello, I've written this book and you've got the whole book there. And I've also written this conclusion chapter and it just doesn't actually feel it, it, it feels kind of, it's very flat and, and it's, it's, you know, it's too much like a textbook and can I just show you this thing and then can you help me rewrite it so it's kind of in the same sort of sense as this note that Billy wrote. So there's no content. It was just, it just read through the the email that he had written to us and and it just rewrote mine. So it was the same ideas I already had, but it wrote it in this, hey, look, here's a letter from the bottleneck master detective, wishing you luck. And I looked at that's really good. And I come back a few days later and I looked at it again and I go, it's still not quite me. And I said, look, I'm really, I just want to write, can you rewrite this thing here as if you're the bottleneck detective? But I want you to rewrite it as if it's actually coming from, say, almost like a father whose son or daughter is leaving home, which I've got here, you know, you know, it's like a, it's a lovely, it's a gift I want to give you as a, as a wise parent who wishes you luck. And, and we toot and fro on that and it came up with a voice and I go that this is the only bit in the whole book where I thought, I don't think I actually could have the capability to write something like that myself. But working with Chat GTP, I come up and I read that bit and I go, but it's probably the least informative book of the bit of the whole book. But it's a bit I'm most proud of, but it's the bit that I probably couldn't have written by myself.

Cindy

Oh, that's so interesting. So what I'm hearing is you worked with chat GPT and Claude both almost as if they were ghost writers that you hired. Like there's this back and forth conversation happening, yes.

Clark

Yeah, yeah, it it, that's actually a good way of I'm doing it but rather than them being in charge, sorry, there's a lot of that there, but a lot of ghost writers will will take it you know, there'll be developmental editing kind of stuff as well. I used them more. It was a lot of to and froing, but I was in charge as the author. I knew what the book was about. I knew the process so they helped me write bits and pieces. But but then it it gave me some really, you know, why don't you put in these detective rules oK, what a good idea. And then it would write things and it would but but then I go. So it was actually it really was a partnership, but I was felt like I was always in charge was a ghostwriter might do a lot of interviewing, come back and go here, go here's your book. It was much more to and fro.

Cindy

Yeah, that's fascinating. So, so let me ask you this. I know there was some, there was some, I don't want to say heated debate on the on the forum, but you know, people are opinionated about this kind of thing. As someone who has used AI for a large portion of of what was written, I mean, obviously the ideas were yours and the, and the final product is yours what do you feel is your responsibility for like including chad GPT and Claude as as Co writers on the finished product? Do you feel do you feel responsible for letting the readers know that this content was created with AI?

Clark

Have thought a lot about that and I thought I decided to let the reviews speak for themselves and the feedback I got speak for itself. But I've been public about writing it so people on my email list know that I've I've said hey look, I wrote this and and they will of course be some of the ones that the the most likely ones to

actually read it first and I have so I've sent copies to some of the people on the Mac power users listed said hey look and they've come and said it never would have occurred to me if you hadn't said that it was actually written with AI certainly it's certainly not written by AI. You know, like I said, I didn't go in and go hey, write me a book about a bottleneck detective. There were there were I wouldn't say hundreds of it. I guess there's probably maybe 80 hours worth of if it'd gone into into that book of actual solid writing there's probably there's been many, many decades of thinking convent to to get to that point, but I decided that I I wasn't going to put a warning like this may contain cashew nuts on on the front of it because I thought that AI is tainted and I would be doing people a disservice they didn't read it because I got, oh, it's written by AI. And I imagine in three, there's a bit when you upload it to Amazon where it says, hey, look, was any AI used in this and I've just gone, yeah, extensively used with extensive human personal editing on it and it's got those options in there. And I imagine that at some stage they may or may not put that in their little product description.

Cindy

I would imagine, yeah.

Clark

Yeah, I got this funny feeling that if I had put a warning on that, it would be kind of like it would have done a disservice to the to the effort I put in. And I also actually genuinely believe that the book is far better for two reasons. It's far better because I work with AI then if I hadn't. So it would tainted if I had put if I put it on the book on Amazon and there are so many people who are writing poor quality books out there on Amazon using this stuff anyway. I don't want to be classed and that.

Cindy

Right.

Clark

Yeah, so, so there's two reasons why I think it's better the first is that I suspect it given I, I'm, I, I, I struggle just sitting tight, but actually the, the physical pain of, of doing that past books have come back to haunt me. So being able to actually go for a drive sometimes and talk to chat GPT and talk through some of the ideas and then come back, that's been magnificent way of having a very clever person to chat to that's not real. Then I come back and, you know, work on the book. So I think the book's actually much richer for having had a really two or three different partners that I can work with to come up to to enhance the ideas or take a metaphor that I've come up with enhance it or for it to tell me to take out a really bad dad joke that I thought was funny that check GTP said it wouldn't. So, so if you take two things, this isn't this is almost like a binary thing. One is that the the first thing is that it's actually the quality of the book I think is better. The second is that I don't know if I would have put in say 2 to 300 hours into writing that book if compared to putting in say 50 to 80 hours. I just don't think I would have. So the the choice was not a handwritten book, you know, but totally manually written book like all my previous stuff. Or it was, it was just like, I just wouldn't have written it because it would have caused me too much physical pain and cost me just far too much time so I think it's 10X honestly 10X my productivity as a writer and I think the quality's gone up too.

Cindy

Excellent. So having read two of your books, I know you said you have 6 published I think having read two of them, I would not have known that the bottleneck detective was written using AI don't want to say it was written by AI because clearly it was not was written by you. I would not have known that AI assisted you with it. When I compare that book to to the previous book to the bottleneck rules I I could not have noticed the difference. I think AI writing sometimes leaves big clues behind like it does like, sometimes it's really easy to spot, like, oh, this is, you know, oh.

Clark

Cringe cringe you didn't post it.

Cindy

Yeah, sometimes it sounds like it was written by, you know, a 16 year old writing an essay for school, right with, you know, 5 paragraphs, 3 sentences per paragraph, and you know, the kind of really dry kind of stuff that's a lot of times what AI sounds like. There was no, there's no indication in in this book that it was written even in part by AI. But I also think you're right i think if you did put that disclaimer, there are certain people in the world, myself included, who would look at that and say, I'm not going to spend my time on it and, and my experience, my level of knowledge would be worse for that because then I would not have gotten to read the book and, and that would have been unfortunate.

Clark

That because there's this whole world of people out there who, who, whose profession is to write poor quality. Well, not poor quality average below a lot lot that their quantity rather than quality. So it detain, detain. And that's why on the map power users end with my email list and also on LinkedIn, I have said, hey, I'm writing with this. And I think it will be bad for the world if we let all of those mass produced highly it's like the highly processed food kinda equivalent of, of writing if we let that taint the, the people who are craftspeople who the equivalent of chefs, if you want to think about the highly processed food. So I've gone out and I, so that's partly why I was really delighted that you, you contacted me because I don't think it's, there will be more rubbish out there. But this gives 2 lots of people a chance to do better. One is like me, I know I'm a really good writer and I know I spent 25 years getting to the point where I can write stuff that's really good and I think it's making me far more productive and I think it's made my writing better. And the other is the people who maybe can't write as well. So actually I've got like a little bit of dichotomy. I'm not actually a very good writer, but I'm a very good writer at the same time i wouldn't pass English tests for spelling and grammar and all of that kind of stuff, but there's a lot of people who find writing really, really difficult and this is going to make it easy and, and the bit actually Cindy that I never pointed out is it so much of this stuff was me actually lying back on the couch reading through

stuff and then just talking oK, OK, this is really good i go into the voice mode, not the advanced chat, chat, chat one, just the I just go through and I say, hello, I'm looking at that and I like this i'd love to bounce off that chapter, which I've just uploaded and I would like you to maybe add, just help me come up with a draft for something that takes the ideas I've got there, but put a contrarian point of view on it just say the opposite. And, and then, and then can you just spit that out and then I'll, I'll use that to edit it. Thanks and then I'll push the button and a moment later we'll come back and I go. It's just so helpful. It just saved me two three hours worth of typing and even if it's rubbish, I'm not a type equally rubbish stuff and then discarded it and wasted two or three hours. So that's just really, really, really helpful the voice but for 20 something years I've been buying and not using voice dictation software because it's always over promised and under delivered.

Cindy

This stuff.

Clark

Actually works really, really well so imagine if I didn't have any hands here. I'm being not facetious i'm just, and I couldn't type. I can now talk to this and it will then take my, you know, 4 or 5 minutes, sometimes 10 minute conversations with it and it will sum it up and it will do and I'll go. That's what I was trying to say. And then I can go back and I can. Ask it to change the, the tone of it or to do a shorter version of it. And then I'll pop in and then I'll go through and I'll edit it and I'll put my dad jokes and, and I'll take the and then I'll look at it go I've also rewritten something and I'll pop it back and say, hey, look, did I, I read this and I and it just feels like active voice. Please rewrite an active voice and it will go through and suddenly the whole thing comes out and you go, wow, why wouldn't it always write an active voice? And so it's really, really good like that just the, and that's probably more effort for than a lot of people would want to do to write something. But then it's my reputation and my legacy. Could you imagine if I put that book out and see the five stars it was getting two stars I couldn't live with?

Cindy

That yeah, yeah, for sure. So what you know, in, in the, in the, in the industry that I am in, in, it is unfortunate and this is, you know, kind of a stance that I take but it is unfortunate in this industry, in the the online business industry that there's always this this need or this want or this push to find the easy button.

Clark

Yes.

Cindy

Do this the easiest, the fastest way, no effort, passive income, all of those things, right? And when tools like chat GPT and Claude and Perplexity came along, there is a group of people in this industry who are teaching others that you don't have to do any work. All you have to do is upload the right prompt and chat GPT will do all of the writing for you. And that's when I kind of stand up and go, wait a minute. This is this is, this is not how you build a business this is not how you write a book this is not how you write A blog. But that's not what I'm hearing from you i hear you put 80 hours of work into this.

Clark

I worked, I'm not sure what your language rate rating is, but so I'm not going to say what I was thinking, but I've worked an awful lot to do this. But I swear, actually, I cannot prove it, but I'm pretty sure that I, I don't think it, the quality's up on my writing and I've got like I've sold thousands of copies of books and they all get actually my very first book that came at the big book was a business novel. And I've had people email me back and they said I cried at the end of it, which is a business novel and people.

Cindy

And I was pretty impressive.

Clark

Yeah, and it's not because they, they felt like they wasted their time, but I, you know, like I've read this five times sort of thing, but one guy emailed me a wee while ago so I read this, listen to the audio book of this every year as a as a reminder and sometimes I cry at the end of it. So I've gone through this thing where I I now know how to write stuff that is totally, totally authentically me. But now I think I can, provided I write short books, which I think is far better for chat GP and I wouldn't write a long book ever again. But if I can write two or three books a year that make people's lives genuinely better, if I can make people cry more often that that, that would be actually, that would be ridiculous but if I can write stuff Clark's.

Cindy

Goal is to make people cry. Apparently make.

Clark

People cry more often, but you, you know this when I, I listen to your podcast before we talk, I've been back i've listened to three of the, the more recent and, and you can tell with that, that the, you know, there's real quality and care and you're trying to make the world a better place. I can tell that you're you're marketing and you're doing all of that stuff, but it's authentic, it's real, it's useful and for you might find it easier to sit down and just maybe I don't know how you prep it i want but but if you find it, you, you may find it easier to sit down and just stick with the way that you do your podcasts. For me, I might sit down and go now and I never would have before. I might sit down and go, Ashley, I want to write, I want to do a podcast or I want to write a an essay about this idea. And so I'll switch to chat GTP and our or Claude

actually, I think it is sometimes better at the moment. And I say, actually, can I give you an example? I think I think this one was really blew my mind. So the stuff that is in Billy Boris Boris book is about using his marketing approach, which is absolutely brilliant and everyone should read their book and then go hiring to to help think about how to be a marketer. But when we the stuff that I worked through him was with me working with leaders who were bottlenecks you know, like you said earlier on, you look at the mirror and go wow on the bottleneck and so many leaders are and I've gone through one of my clients. I grew her from, well, together, we worked together and she grew from having 30 staff to 300 over the last three years or so. And Can you imagine the growth that she had to go through and a whole team had to go through? And now she swears that she's better as a leader of 300 than she was of 30. And I think I want to explain this sort of the, you know, with a, a metaphor because that's, that's, that's his writer that's, you know, one of the things I just use all the time and I thinking a snake, snakes, snakes grow that I don't know if you know, snakes, they as they grow bigger, they have to shed their skin. Then they'll grow into the next size and the next size and the next size. That's quite a good metaphor, But it's not not like she actually her tin got bigger, but it just didn't kind of feel right no one wants to be compared with the snake. So I went into chat GTP and we had maybe an hour and a half conversation where I said, hey, look, I'm looking for a metaphor i described all of this and then I said, can you suggest one i said, how about a butterfly at a chrysalis? And I go, Nah, vomit yeah. And we kept going and then it said, how about a hermit crab? And I go, what a hermit crab they move from shell to shell and as they move from this shell, they go out and they actually have to be very brave and move up to the next size shell.

Cindy

And when they get.

Clark

There they have.

Cindy

To move naked.

Clark

Then they're naked yeah, They go out naked everyone looks away and they see, and then they move up and they get to this new shell, and then they've got to grow into that shell. But they've also actually, if you think about it a little bit more imaginatively, and if it's as a metaphor, you've also got to abandon this stuff, a lot of the stuff that you had that was perfect for the previous shell. You've also got to acquire new stuff that fits in the new shell. And then as you're doing that, you've also got to be on the lookout for what the next show is going to be like. And there's and so chat sheet came up with this and I ended up running sort of effective short training things for a whole lot of people that worked in this company because they had grown massively during this time. But because that metaphor of the, the, the, the hermit crab, as people grow, they have to abandon stuff, move and get new stuff. So many people were going through that and they just loved the metaphor because it was just really it just, it just, it was just easy for them to imagine it was. But that I would not have come up with that myself because I didn't know really that much about hermit crabs. But with chat, GTP and I, we went through and we just had a really lovely little chat i suggested that it suggested a lot of things, but that one, there I go, I said, and so that kind of use and, and you know, I could say, hey, spit out an article based on that or I could not i could just like in that case, I just turned it into a keynote presentation and just talked through myself. But the ideation and the the the spark came from the two of us working together, and neither of us would have come up with it by ourselves.

Cindy

Yeah, yeah, I love that. I love how you you use it as a tool, but it's not the only tool in your toolbox. It's it's, which is a lot of times the way we hear about it being used as the only tool in the toolbox. Just do this one thing and be successful, you know?

Clark

And it's funny, the ones that are that we're normally hearing from, I did subscribe to 1 sub stack that was about writing with AI. And I thought actually, I'd love to do this. And it, it was kind of interesting. But they had basically they were, they're very cleverly selling information that people want, but I don't think any of it would actually fit for me it didn't trans it just it seemed like it would really help for people who want to do quantity and it wouldn't actually lift the quality up. So so it was actually, it was a good, good, good stuff that they put out. But again, it was the quantity that it was all all of it was starting with dollar signs and easiness. And you said the word easy before that was the one that the easy way of of doing stuff and and and it certainly can do some heavy lifting for us. But at the end of the day, it it just don't. We we could if we wanted to get whole lots of chat GTPS and claws and have them one day talking to each other and they could be like that start that that war games thing where?

Cindy

They played tip tip time.

Clark

Isn't it and they?

Cindy

Could be producing.

Clark

Content and consuming it, yes.

Cindy

Yeah and then producing more of it yeah, that's just a terrifying thought.

Clark

Maybe that's how the world ends, Cindy.

Cindy

Well, you know, I've seen Terminator i'm pretty sure that is how the world ends.

Clark

I think so, yeah.

Cindy

But not today.

Clark

Not today, but a few more years.

Cindy

We're not, we're not there yet. Clark, this has been fascinating hearing your process and, and reading through your books i, I truly, truly enjoyed both books that I read i've, I've enjoyed getting to know you better. Where can people find your books?

Clark

Right well, they can. So there's one other Clark Ching in the world.

Cindy

Oh, and he OK.

Clark

With an E.

Cindy

Clark with an E.

Clark

Actually, I don't know. I've never met him.

Cindy

Because you're Clark with an E.

Clark

I'm Clark E Yeah. And he's a dentist. He's in Canada. And way back our ancestors would have left Cornwall and Devon and some went to Canada and some went to New Zealand. So we are related, but Clark Ching is a very distinctive surname so if people want to find me Clark ching.com if anyone that's listening would actually like a copy of either of those books. I make my money from consulting and I try to be as generous as I possibly can with giving away the books and actually making them useful so if anyone would like a copy, they can go to Amazon if they like, but just find me on LinkedIn or just email me at Clark at Clark qing.com and I'd be very happy to send a, a, a free, you know, PDF of any of the books.

Cindy

That is very generous they are well worth reading they're quick reads i think it took me 45 minutes to read The Bottleneck Detective and it was every bit as entertaining as any movie I had ever seen so well worth. Well worth the time to invest in reading them and well worth looking at them even, you know, from a standpoint of knowing that this was written in partnership with Chad G and Claude and looking at how the book is put together and then, you know, kind of listening back to this interview about the steps that you you took i think it's, it's going to be very informative for people i'm a big fan of reverse engineering things, you know, looking at looking at how someone else is doing something and figuring it out rather than then taking a class or even though I sell courses, whatever. But you know, I think I think reverse engineering is one of the best ways to learn anything so even reading the books from that point of view is going to be beneficial, I think to people. Is there anything else you want people to know about you anything else you anything I didn't?

Clark

Ask, can we go back to you, Cindy? He was standing looking in the mirror.

Cindy

Yeah, as the as the bottleneck in my business, yes, we are all and and this is for, for everybody that I that I work with, I work with solopreneurs, we are all the bottleneck.

Clark

Totally so what you're going to do is if, if you were to read my stuff to go the bottleneck, What that means is that your business moves at the speed of you. So I'm, I'm a I'm a consultant so I'm a perfect to be a solo consultant and I'm exactly the same. And so, so much what of what we want to do. It's just we, we try and do it all of ourselves. And that's why I think you're big on setting up systems, which is really good so you offload so much of his stuff off off of your brain so that you can focus on the stuff that you're really, really, really good at and and that's just the general pattern. We we shouldn't feel bad about being the bottleneck it's just inevitable. But if you can hire an assistant to do some stuff, if you can hire an assistant and give them chat GTP, maybe here's a really crazy example and you want to write content. Let's say you went into check GTP and you go, I want to write something about this. Give it to your assistant. Ask them to go off and research some stuff and produce using check GTP, a draft article. So that could be like an hour, an hour and a half worth of work for an assistant. You come back and you look at it, you go, oh, that's terrible. Get rid of that, get rid of that, get rid of that. Move that from there up to there. And then suddenly you would just do that just like a school teacher would with a red pen, pop it back to your assistant and say, hey, look, could you maybe just edit this stuff out and then pass it back to me again. And now we've got this weird situation that you're working with someone who cannot obviously write like you, but you're working off a draft that's actually reasonably good quality, but it just doesn't feel like you. And then you can do the you can do the editing. You came up with the idea, you came, you then got a draft that came from other places, but you go, oh, that's terrible, slash slash, slash, move that around

you go, actually, that's not bad. And then you might pass it through something like Grammarly to, to, to, perhaps to, to, to get that feedback, which is AI again, you might even if you were brave enough, you might even think of running the spell checker on it, which is probably, we don't call it AI, but it was it's, it's, it's the, the most rudimentary form of something like AI it's, it's all other people's work, you know, over many centuries, they.

Cindy

Call it AI now, because AI is the buzzword, but it's it's been AI for a decade.

Clark

Actually, could you imagine if if they didn't invent spell checkers now, it would be AI spell checkers, right? yeah. So just thinking there's lots of things that you can do and I'm really not trying to push the AI thing because I, I, what I'm trying to. I think the reason why I decided I would be vocal about it is that I think it's actually made a huge difference for to me, I think it make a huge difference to a lot of people. But just don't use it to, to produce documents full of smiling pile of poop emojis or metaphorically produce something that you feel proud of and is actually useful and other people can take your ideas and, and, and use them. That's one of the most generous things that a clever solar preneur can do is actually share their expertise in a way that other people can read it. And AI just makes that easier but you can also go the evil way and just produce, you know, piles of poop, you know?

Cindy

Mediocre, mediocre stuff.

Clark

Yeah, not good for anyone. Yeah anyway, I'm off my. I'll hop up top down off my soapbox now.

Cindy

Hey, you're welcome you're welcome to hop on your soapbox on my podcast any day. I'll tell you that. So thank you so much for joining me i will put links to your website, to your, to your Amazon, to your LinkedIn, all in the show notes in case people want to get in touch or if they want to read a copy of the bottleneck rules or the bottleneck detective, both of which I highly recommend. Even if you're not in, you know, manufacturing or, you know, in those in those in those businesses where where Clark is is a consultant and earning his keep. I still think there's a lot to be learned from those books as a solopreneur, even if it's just a different way of looking at where the bottlenecks are.

Clark

Yeah, thank you, Cindy.

Cindy

Thank you so much, Clark really appreciate you i really enjoyed our conversation today.

Clark

Thank you Likewise.

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