



**Complete Transcript: HALO Talks with Katie Webb
Posted May 10, 2022**

Pete Moore:

This is Pete Moore wanted to officially announce the release of time to win again. 52 takeaways from team sports to ensure your business success. I wrote this book over the last year. I think you're going to love it. Good to great meets where's Waldo pick 'em up for your team. Time to win in 2022. Happy to come to your club, your studio, your company, and talk about ways we can optimize business and win going forward. Go halo. This is Pete Moore on halo talks NYC straight off gate third COVID booster shot. I'm feeling amazing. We are going to talk supplements today. We've got Katie Webb coming from ALA out of New York. Katie, welcome to halo talks.

Katie Webb:

Hi, nice to meet you. Thanks for having me.

Pete Moore:

Great. So you, you' solving a very big frustration in the supplement category. We're not sure why a lot of these things are actually called supplements when you read the ingredients, you've actually figured that out. So why don't you give us your illustrious background and the reason why you are founding ALA and why this is going to be a name that people are going to be aware of pretty soon.

Katie Webb:

Yeah. Thank you. Yeah. So you know, my background, I spent the last 10 to 11 years actually in media partnerships, I was working at a lot of digital publishers starting in LA and then moved to New York about five years ago at the same time was a personal trainer and fitness instructor. So was teaching classes, you know, early in the morning and taking on clients of my own while also trying to keep up with my own fitness routine which I've always been pretty passionate about mm-hmm <affirmative> and that sort of led me to looking into the fitness supplement worlds a little bit deeper, both for myself. And I was just getting a lot of questions from clients on, you know, what I took or what I would recommend, which gets into a little bit of like a hairy area.

Katie Webb:

So I, you know, I started to live, I live across from GNC, so I spent a lot of time there and was looking at a lot of the kind of pre-workout supplements on the market. I, you know, have a nutrition background and, and certification there. So I, I had some information of my own of what I was looking for. And I at first was just really kind of turned off just by the appearance of all of it, right? Like it's really in terms of

just on its face packaging, very intense, very extreme really marketed to kind of like the body building community or, or professional athlete, peak performance community. So it was a little imitated intimidated by the packaging. Right. But the, the ingredients are kind of what really got me. I'm, you know, someone who's a little more caffeine sensitive, I try to follow a pretty balanced, healthy diet, primarily plant based, but I would, you know, more identify as a flexitarian if I'm being realistic mm-hmm <affirmative> and I couldn't really find any formulas that really were leveraging like more food ingredients over just ingredients.

Katie Webb:

I had never heard of plus, you know, 300 milligrams of caffeine and, you know, talking to a lot of my female clients too, had a similar kind of sentiment going and looking for something like this. They were just like, I don't know what any of this stuff is. I don't feel comfortable playing that much caffeine in my body. So for now I'm going to drink coffee. Like that was kind of the, the sentiment. So I got really interested in, in starting to do a lot of research and around functional foods and super foods and how they can support, you know, a fitness routine as well as your wellness routine. And got together eventually, you know, got together with a, a food scientist and, and put something together, but that's kind of the backstory.

Pete Moore:

Gotcha. You know, it, it's really interesting. You look at the, at the supplement space historically, you know, there, there there's no FDA approval on any of these products. And I think there's been a big catchall in you know, what someone's allowed to put in that section. And then when you do read the ingredients, you know, whether there was actually a food scientist or whether they just, you know, it's more of a cocktail, if you will, that they put together, you know, do you see, is there any regulatory bodies out there? Is there any associations that are actually coming to the forefront that you've seen that can actually put like a good housekeeping stamp on supplements?

Katie Webb:

Yeah. I mean, it's tough, right? Cuz like the FDA approval thing I think is confusing in a way that like FDA, FDA approval would imply that that's a drug right. Is right. What FDA approval is for and supplements are supposed to be supplements and you know, not your full diet, not your meal. So I think it's, there's definitely been a lot more of cracking down on labels and regulation. And a lot of realistically, a lot of these performance supplements are coming from overseas and there's some, you know, we don't really know like where this stuff is coming from. If it's, it, there's a reason it's made there. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> and so on. I won't, you know, speculate too much, but we, for, for our process, we since we're using, we use all plant based ingredients, everything is really of a food source.

Katie Webb:

We supply all of our ingredients directly and in the us. So they're undergoing testing only, you know, at the supplier level, before we get all of our ingredients and then multiple rounds of third party testing when they come to our co Packers. So we're doing everything, you know, that we can and building around, you know, kind of having to rebuild across the stigma that the industry has and really develop trust with our customer and transparency. We, you know, we highlight our main ingredients on the front of our packaging. There's only eight ingredients and all of our formulas and everything is something you recognize. So we're doing our part in trying to make things a little bit more transparent. <Laugh>

Pete Moore:

Right. You know, so when you look at the, the category, obviously there are multi-billion dollar companies, you know, GNC obviously has their own private label products. So what gave you the, you know, inertia besides being a, you know, an athlete and a trainer and saying, Hey, look, if I want to do something I'm going to, I'm going to execute on that. But when you took a look at the market size and you took a look at, you know, where you think your, you know, your, your space is you know, in solving your own frustrations, H how do you think about that either from talking to potential investors or to say, look, I know I'm going with a holistic path here. And at some point, the market's going to understand, you know, what I'm providing.

Katie Webb:

Yeah. That's exactly it, right? Like, we're, I think we're seeing across a lot of categories, like, you know, indefinitely in food, in candy and soda, like every everyone's kind of extending these sort of plant based options and, and building real brands around their products versus just kind of a, a huge catalog of products without any real, you know, mission or, or personality behind it. And that's something that, you know, when we look at active nutrition, like a 14 billion market globally, and the majority of that is pre-workout and with the plant-based interest in the way that things are going, we've kind of delved into about a 1 billion opportunity in this sort of plant forward active nutrition market. We certainly don't expect the, you know, course C4 for whomever user to necessarily be interested in our products out of the gate, but that's not, you know, our target consumer right now, but eventually we, we do see the market going there. People are, especially now, obviously coming out of COVID, people are paying more attention to what they're putting in their bodies and this sort of pre-workout fitness supplement realm is something that's still very synthetic and unnatural. So makes a ton of sense.

Pete Moore:

Gotcha. When, when we meet with entrepreneurs you know, one of the questions that we have, whether we ask it directly, or whether we think about it is what gives you the right to become an entrepreneur, you know, in this space and, you know, maybe talk about your 10 years of doing digital partnerships. And obviously a lot of what you're going to be doing is direct to consumer. And how, you know, having that DNA, you know, gives you the ability to say, look, I know what customer acquisition cost is. I know what lifetime client value is. And I know how to optimize that. You know, it's not like I just came out of personal training and said, Hey, look, I'm going to start up this supplement line and, you know, just trust me, I'll figure it out. So talk about your background and how that kind of gives you somewhat of like a trampoline to say, look, I get the sales and marketing side that that's not something you need to worry about.

Katie Webb:

Yep. Yeah. so the majority of what I did in media I started off in like TV buying. So when, you know, I was buying spots and dots for Disney was like my first client and the agency side, you know, but that eventually grew to moving over to the digital side, doing more digital partnerships, not only on, but I was at bars stool sports for a while. And a lot of what we did was content partnerships, influencer partnerships, social partnerships, and really like leaning into authenticity and matching, you know, brands with talent that really felt strongly about the brand and could really story tell behind it. And that's something we're, you know, really looking. And I'm kind of focusing on with ALA is like this supplement world specifically in fitness has kind of been you know, like I said, it's, it's a suite of a million supplements on a website usually digitally.

Katie Webb:

There's not, you don't know who's behind it or what's behind it. There's certainly like the kind of nutritional certification side of, of clean ingredients and having expert endorsement and things like that, but it doesn't have much of a personal touch and much of a community touch to it. So that's kind of my bread and butter is bringing more of that to this space. And you know, our main customer is like our brand's like 85 to 90% female mm-hmm <affirmative>. And they are, you know, women are the most vocal about better for you products. They're the ones that are recommending it. So they're loved ones. They make up like 70% of supplement sales in general. So, you know, that kind of, part of my background of storytelling, content creation partnerships is, you know, what I think is positioning me well for the marketing side of this, because this industry kind of hasn't had too much of that. Right.

Pete Moore:

You know, have, when you think about the marketing for this type of product, you know, whether it's the new rules in the NCAA where, you know, name, image, likeness on, you know, potentially division one female athletes if you take a look at maybe the types of celebrities or, or fitness, you know, women that you want to maybe have here, or maybe you just say, Hey, look, I wanted this to be mainstream. So actually don't want to have a celebrity endorsement, cuz this isn't about being a celebrity. This is being, you know, a, a driven, you know, woman that's, you know, an or, you know, run living an ordinary life or an optimized life. So how does someone like you think about opportunities like that or do you think about it and say, Hey, look, that's probably not the best way to spend marketing dollars. Maybe they want to be investors in my company, but I'm not paying someone to be a celebrity for something that is not deemed a celebrity lifestyle.

Katie Webb:

Hmm. Yeah. That's a good question. Yeah, I mean like our, our focus now in, in the early stages is partnering. Like we have a, a pretty large ambassador team. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> female college athletes included and kind of like partnering with more smaller influencers and ambassadors, if that's that nature that really embody the lifestyle and the active routine and the wellness routine that is, you know, our core customer base. And I think about celebrity that's definitely a lot of like feedback we get a lot is like, you guys need like a celebrity to be like the face of your brand. And it's definitely not out of the realm of possibility. I, I think we eventually will do that down the road, but it would, it will need to be, you know, we're not thinking like celebrity fitness trainer route for this, our, our core customer is women that work out to feel good, physically, mentally. It's a part of who they are and a part of what they do, but it's not their entire life and personality. So it's kind of like what you said, you know, our, our brand ethos is really like the, the man or woman that is optimized and is, is on the go and is, is taking care of themselves physically, mentally. And fitness just happens to be a small part of that. So that would kind of be the thinking around a, you know, a larger major partner of what they would embody.

Pete Moore:

Gotcha. So where did the name come from? And you know, how, how did that evolve?

Katie Webb:

ALA is a Scottish gala word and it means from the strong place. Oh, nice. Yeah, really loved the word. <Laugh> really loved four

Pete Moore:

Letters. Nice and easy to remember

Katie Webb:

Four letters. Nice. We, we have, I will say we've run into some, some challenges because ALA is also the abbreviation or the acronym for the American immigration lawyer's association, which has been a fun challenge with SEO <laugh>.

Pete Moore:

But gotcha. I think it, I think, I think it's used in a lot of Dave Matthews band songs too. I think <laugh>, and I was just listening to a lot of Dave Matthews and they go like, I don't which one that is the space between or crash. I'm not sure, but we'll get it the end of the we'll put it at the end and that'll be your theme song. And then you can say, you didn't do it, I'll do it. And we'll take the, we'll take the blame.

Katie Webb:

I've been to 12 Dave Matthew's band shows and I can't, I can't pinpoint what song that is, but I hope that we find it <laugh>.

Pete Moore:

Yeah. Did I, did I riff it? Okay. I mean, was it like, we don't have to edit that out. Okay. Thank you. Cause I've got a big Dave Matthews. Like he, he took over some of my COVID audio space, so it's kind of nice. So as you think about building your team you know, how did you how'd you put that together and in what sequence?

Katie Webb:

Yeah. so I'm the only fulltime person right now. And part of our, our raise will be building out the team, but we've, we've had to rely heavily on advisors for sure. And I've hired a couple like freelancing partners that have been with me for a while. They're mostly based in organic and organic content, community and social. So that was the priority for me. You know, we raised a small precede earlier this year and while I could have very well, you know, dumped it into Facebook marketing out of the gate and prayed and hoped that, you know, it would go well, I, I know that world too well of what the capital it takes, especially when you're a health and wellness product. It's a very expensive platform to be on. So, and it wouldn't be true to who we are either, at least on the early side, I really am focused on building a community and building a brand. So all of our hires in terms of, you know, even part-time help have really been focused around that. Moving forward will look to, to scale that out more and bringing on someone full-time that really is focused on content and community and our influencer and ambassador program. And then also look to bring on more of an operations sort of my counterpart and operations, cause I'm very heavy in the, the marketing and brand world for sure.

Pete Moore:

<Laugh> gotcha. Yes, just three intros. Just thinking out loud and just for our audience to say, okay, you got an opportunity. Think about what relationships you can potentially tap into that would make sense and prioritize those. We, we did a podcast with a group out of Chicago called joy of mom that has a really big social media presence. One of our investments that, that ended up getting sold successfully with a woman named Carrie Glassman, who's got a nutritious life. And then we're an investor in a company called higher dose. Yeah. Which is female founded you know, workout recovery and beauty products. Yeah. And some of that could turn into definitely the core customer base, I think, of, of who

you're, you're targeting there, you know? So in, in closing here, you know, how do you think about, you know, your staging, your progress and, and, you know, obviously you got a type, a personality in order to become an entrepreneur in this space. So how do you kind of engage your own success and, and say, okay, I'm making progress. It's not going to happen overnight. And then maybe close with a if there's a business quote or personal quote that, you know, resonates with you or that, that you kind of live by.

Katie Webb:

Yeah. Yeah. I am definitely type a I'm a little bit of a pessimist by nature. So, which is weird, like becoming an entrepreneur, I'm not the overly optimistic type by nature, but I've, I've kind of, you know, learned and, and made an effort to really celebrate every milestone, no matter how small it is. I think we, as essentially as a solo founder, a first time founder you have an idea of how things are going to go and they are never, they never go the way that you think they're going to things don't things don't grow overnight. Especially when you're, you know, bootstrapped in the beginning. It's very, it's like people will kind of think it's well, you're not going to be able to see this on the podcast cause I'm drawing a line in the air, but it's not up to the right.

Katie Webb:

It's really like down, down, like down for a considerable amount of time. And then all of a sudden, like something happens from something you did like four months ago. Yeah. And it's like just making, coming to terms with that and being patient and staying focused on like two to three things at a time. <Laugh> if you, if you can help, it is something that I really try to do. And in terms of favorite quote, this one's kind of, it might be a little played out, but I, I really try to live by this is don't let perfect be the enemy of good which, you know, we, we really me, especially there's a lot, I still don't know. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>, but it's really important to, you know, keep trying new things quickly and learning from them quickly versus, you know, tuckering behind the scenes for too long amount of time to get something perfect. And then by the time it's finished, you know, the opportunities kind of passed you by. So just getting things out there and trying them, even if they're not great.

Pete Moore:

Great. So we'll have this on the show notes, but you know, give us the, the, the way to buy to products, the website, and how to contact you directly.

Katie Webb:

Yeah. Yeah. We are@meetala.com. So M E E T a I L a.com like meeting your friend. So we're there. We also just launched with anthropology which is exciting. We're on their website and in stores nationally, and you can reach me. I'm just katie@meetala.com, K a T I E.

Pete Moore:

Great look forward to seeing you in person at one of our events. Good to see you and we'll get some product and happy to help you on your journey.

Katie Webb:

Awesome. Good to see you guys. Thank you. All right.