

INDIE MAJOR PODCAST

9/10/25 Lucas Lloyd

Individualized Major: The Science of Sales & Social Capital

Ken:

This is Indie Major, a show devoted to the wide-ranging stories and visions of individualized majors at the University of Connecticut. I'm your host, Ken Cormier. I'm here with Lucas Lloyd. Hey, Lucas.

Lucas:

Hey, how's it going?

Ken:

Good, how are you?

Lucas:

Doing good.

Ken:

Good, good. So you are our individualized major here at UConn. Why don't you tell us what your major is and what it's all about?

Lucas:

Yes, so my major is the science of sales and social capital. The main premise behind it is combining the works of business and communication in one, sort of to form the backbone of business. I made it because I come from like an entrepreneurial background. So I love the process of creating a business and selling it to people. So that motivated me to make this major with sales being the forefront of it, but also social capital. So the social network that I can attain and create over time, which acts as a resource, too, with time. So I've also found that with this major, it's pushed me towards a professional sales career, which I didn't expect going into this. But it's created a whole other avenue for me, which has been great.

Ken:

Interesting. So what were you thinking at first?

Lucas:

Yeah, so I was doing it for my future entrepreneurial endeavors. Just being able to, I think selling is a thing people need to use every day in communicating with people. So whether you're selling a business, selling a product or service, or selling like your personal brand, you're always selling. So being able to master that skill set was my main goal.

Ken:

Got it. Okay. So it sounds very business-centered, this degree. Now, one interesting thing, it's kind of a nitpicky detail about the program for individualized majors, is we do not actually grant degrees from the School of Business here on campus. And I know, but you can still take business courses, and you've taken a bunch of business administration courses, it looks like, an accounting course. So

there's that side of it. But what else did you kind of bring into it? Because I think your degree is coming from the liberal, well, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. So what other kind of courses did you find there?

Lucas:

So starting with like the business side, the individualized major allowed me to refine which business courses I wanted to take, which I found has helped me because I've focused on sales, marketing courses. And then on the other side, the liberal arts side has predominantly been communication-based courses. I've had courses about persuasion and acts such as that. So that also connects with the sales major that I'm focusing on.

Ken:

Nice. Okay, so the Department of Communications here at UConn. And what kind of classes, what kind of stuff do you think you learned over there?

Lucas:

Yeah, so as I said, persuasion. I learned about professional communication, so how to actively communicate in a professional network. I'm taking a communication marketing course this upcoming semester, which I'm looking forward to. And they all sort of tie into that realm of communication and how it will be applied in the business world.

Ken:

Yeah, so there's some overlap there, like communication marketing. So some of the ideas that you definitely study in the School of Business, you're also studying over in the communications department.

Lucas:

Yes.

Ken:

Any public relations or that kind of thing?

Lucas:

No public relations um i've i'm taking a computer mediated communication course so so how how to communicate on digital platforms which is it's being used widely today so um but nothing nothing public communication yet.

Ken:

So you said earlier that you come from an entrepreneurial family and i wonder what you meant by is that what you said?

Lucas:

Entrepreneurial background.

Ken:

Okay so what's your entrepreneurial background?

Lucas:

Yeah. So I started my first business during COVID. It was a custom shoe business and that opened my eyes to entrepreneurship. Just the fact that you can do something you're passionate about and monetize it as a job. And I gained good traction with that, gained the understandings of how to market a business and promote it and run just the operations day to day. And then following that, moving towards college, I created an aerial photography business, which I've found I learned the most from with cold outreach with clients, client management, and again, the marketing side of the business. And I found such a passion in that realm that when I first went to college at URI originally, I was majoring in entrepreneurship and innovation. And I also worked at the Entrepreneurship Center there. So surrounding myself with entrepreneurs and other startup founders. And then since I've come to UConn, I made this major to continue this passion for entrepreneurship. But I'm also working at CCI, the Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

Ken:

So the pandemic sort of got you motivated to try new things?

Lucas:

Yeah, yeah, a lot of time on my hands and a lot of YouTube videos got me home.

Ken:

So when you say you were doing aerial photography, how were you, what were the logistics of that?

Lucas:

Yeah, so a little after the pandemic, I was cleaning out a guy's basement just for like busy work, make some money. And he ended up gifting me a drone for free. And I saw that as an opportunity, so I got all the licenses I needed. And I made this business so mainly I was focusing mainly on real estate but I also did some more freelance activities and then I tried to move also towards like a media business so so just camera work videos and such.

Ken:

Wow so did you create a name for that business?

Lucas:

Yeah it was L2 optics aerial photography and film.

Ken:

L2 optics nice and it sounds like you're also doing basement cleaning.

Lucas:

Just that one.

Ken:

Okay, it's a wide range of entrepreneurial uh efforts there when you think about your particular motivation to do this stuff because you had time in your hands right um during that first period of of the pandemic I mean does this spirit of innovating creating does that

was that something you already kind of had or is this something you just discovered at that time?

Lucas:

No I never truly had that. I feel like i was always in ways creative with like my thinking but it was never applied like i had a custom shoe business and i was never artistic in any way so um the fact that i was able to like prove my creativity and really implement it um was something new to me.

Ken:

Man i can't stop being curious so the custom shoe business what were the logistics around that how did that all work?

Lucas:

Yeah so i connecting passions i had a passion for shoes and um i i saw it as a way of making like a one-of-one individual pair that uh no one else had and then a lot of the friends i knew uh coaches i had also loved the idea and loved having their own set of shoes that were different from any others out there. And yeah, the passion just took me from there.

Ken:

Wow. Okay. So, and I was going to ask you, but you've already mentioned you had some opportunities to work with some different ongoing efforts and entrepreneurship on campus here at UConn. Was that internships or how did that all work? And what, you know, who did you meet or what did you learn from that experience?

Lucas:

Yeah. So I actually wouldn't be in this place without the individualized major because when looking for advisors for the application, I came across Rory McGloin, who is one of the head people over at CCI. And him and I talked. He agreed to be my advisor, but he also recruited me to the podcast that they do there called Timely Topics, which I've been on since I applied and then I became a student ambassador this year so I've fully immersed myself there with the people the staff and all the startups going on there.

Ken:

And so you so what is the basic mission of that of that?

Lucas:

Yeah so so CCI is in is a UConn-based program here, and what they do is they can work with startup founders to get from, say, point A to point B on their entrepreneurial journey, and we also offer seed funding programs where they can get seed funding to put towards improving their business in the future.

Ken:

All right, and so in addition to all these things, every individualized major also has to do a Culminating Research Project. So you've been working on that as well. Why don't you just say a little bit about what you've been researching, what you've kind of discovered in that process?

Lucas:

Yeah. So in one of the courses I've taken here at UConn, it was a professional sales course. And a big piece of the course was the idea of emotional intelligence. And that got the gears turning in my head about understanding emotional intelligence and its importance. And I wanted to connect it to my major. So I put it in a professional sales realm, seeing the effect of emotional intelligence on leadership in professional sales.

Ken:

Okay. All right. And so you had to sort of dive into the emotional intelligence, what history, philosophy, theory, that kind of stuff?

Lucas:

Yep yeah we i um i looked into the history where it came from it's the the term is a rather new term and there's still a lot of research and studies going on about it um but in connecting like the the communication psychological side of of people to business it has shown to to have its its benefits, and especially in the leadership realm, because leaders need to lead by example, but also have to be able to handle themselves in a professional manner.

Ken:

So my next question, I guess my last question really is, where do you think all this is headed? You're going to be graduating soon here, right? Or you're going to be graduating next in the winter.

Lucas:

Yes. Yes.

Ken:

So you've got a semester left. And then what are you thinking? What do you, when you look beyond that what's your ideal kind of next steps?

Lucas:

Yeah uh eventually at some point down the line i'd love to create operate and run my own business um i i think that comes with time like thinking of new ideas and where where there's a gap and and people people need to have their their problems fixed so that will come down the line um i've been sort of pushed towards the professional sales realm which i'm focusing this summer on getting experience to see if that's truly something i enjoy um but yeah whether it's professional sales or entrepreneurship that's where i see myself down the line.

Ken:

Okay do you mind my asking what's the sales stuff you're going to be pursuing this summer you have something something lined up?

Lucas:

Yep so the main the main two competitors for like internships jobs have been like wireless phone sales getting getting experience just hands-on with with people in like the retail setting and just like how a sales position works and then the other one has been a real estate job internship to because real estate is also sales so just getting that experience is what i'm looking for.

Ken:

Right are you going to bring your aerial photography experience to the real estate?

Lucas:

I talked to them about it that i had i had done that in the past.

Ken:

Nice so in the pandemic you found yourself creating ideas for businesses and just launching into them um in the i guess you've this you've been here for two and a half three years at uconn um and during that time have you found yourself getting the inkling to invent something or, or come up with a new business idea on campus or that sort of thing?

Lucas:

Um, I had a, I did have a printing business to, to, for students where they could just order whatever they need and I'd do the printing jobs and delivery for a little bit. And then I, I was working on a Instagram page, a UConn based Instagram page that is, is working to create like a monetary piece that, that students could use to promote themselves. So those are probably the two, two main things I've worked on on campus.

Ken:

Awesome. I had a feeling you had probably been creating stuff since you've been here. What was the name of the printing company? Did you have a name for that one?

Lucas:

Yeah, it was called Uprints.

Ken:

Nice. Awesome. And tell me again, remind our listeners again are the name of your individualized major.

Lucas:

Ys it's the science of sales and social capital.

Ken:

Right which is also a really inventive title i have to say yeah we thought that when you were coming into the program.

Lucas:

Yes.

Ken:

So i love it i really appreciate all that creativity and all that interesting work that goes in so many different directions and uh yeah thanks so much for coming in and sharing these ideas with us.

Lucas:

Thank you.

Ken:

Thanks for listening to *Indie Major*. If you'd like more information about individualized and interdisciplinary studies at the University of Connecticut, please visit our website at iisp.uconn.edu. That's iisp.uconn.edu. We'd also like to thank UConn Enrichment Programs and WHUS UConn Radio for their support of this show.