

How To Sell French Pastries Online with Anthony Rosemond

David Crabill: Welcome to the Forrager Podcast, where I talk with cottage food entrepreneurs, about how they started a food business from home. I'm David Crabill. And today I'm talking with Anthony Rosemond. Anthony, along with his wife, Yami, live in Phelan, California, and they sell French macarons with their business Anthony and Yami, both moved to California from France a few years ago, with the hopes of bringing authentic French pastries to the United States. Little did they know at the time that Americans would be most interested in their macarons and after a few months of testing at local farmer's markets, they quickly transitioned to selling only macarons from the beginning.

They plan to use the farmer's markets as a stepping stone to building an online brand and shipping nationwide. that's exactly what they've done. Yami focuses on the baking side. Well, Anthony focuses on the business side of things. Anthony has invested heavily into learning social media search engine optimization and e-commerce, and it's paid off. They now have over 100,000 Instagram followers and have grown to the point of building their own commercial kitchen space and storefront. in this episode, you'll hear the many hurdles they have faced to get to where they are today and why they have become so successful. key to their success has come from continuously listening to customers and focusing on creating a great customer experience.

And with that, let's jump right into this episode.

Welcome to the show. Anthony. Nice to have you here.

[00:01:32] **Anthony Rosemond:** Thanks for having me,

[00:01:34] **David Crabill:** Yeah. So Anthony, can you go back to the beginning of this journey. How did it all get started?

[00:01:39] **Anthony Rosemond:** We kind of left everything we had in France. So my wife and I are both French chefs from Le Cordon Bleu in Paris. And we, we were, you know, I was engineer and she was a human resource director back there.

and yeah, we just, you know, we, we had this idea in mind for a while. Her being, you know, really fond of baking and me on my side being also, you know, baker person, but strong like skill for marketing. So together we kind of knew we wanted to do something like that.

So yeah, back in 2017, I guess uh, where we, we left Paris for California to uh, to start Pastreez.

[00:02:18] **David Crabill:** went to culinary school, I mean, Le Cordon Bleu is like one of the most prestigious, if not the most prestigious culinary school or French pastry school out there, you know, what was that like?

[00:02:31] **Anthony Rosemond:** Oh it was very intense. It was an intensive program, so it's almost like day and night. So, you know, you start at like 8:00 AM. You finish at 8:00 PM and this is for few months. like one day is one pastry that's, that's how it works.

So you start in the morning and in the afternoon, when you go back home, you go back with like an apple pie or macarons or crepes or, you know, something like that. and it was important for us to do that before, to even start the business, because we wanted to know what uh, what is it like to be a hundred percent baking, So after that experience, we knew that it was something that we will really enjoy in our day-to-day life.

[00:03:12] **David Crabill:** Yeah, Cause you said that Yami was in human resources, you're an engineer. it sounded like you both had successful careers. I think I read that Yami was in HR for at least a decade. what drew you to even I mean, even choosing to go such an intensive culinary school program, let alone deciding this is what you want to dedicate your life to.

[00:03:37] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, it was in my part, it was really about doing what you like to do. I wasn't really happy in my day to day engineer uh, uh, work. I knew from the beginning for a while that one day I will do my own stuff, and when I met Yami back in 2011 we, we kind of had the same feeling, of doing our own business. It's just at the time we didn't really know that would be a good match in this, in this field.

So yeah, it kind of, it was always there. It's just, we took the time to see how can we be a good team together to make something really work.

[00:04:15] **David Crabill:** Okay. So you went to culinary school. That was a very intensive program over, it sounds like many months. And then you decided to move everything from your home in France to California start a business totally out of the blue. I mean, not only were you trying to start the business, but you were also just trying to get accustomed to living in a new country. mean, what was that like?

[00:04:39] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, thanks for asking that because it's an important part of the business that maybe um, American race that, you know, live in the country for awhile don't really have that in mind, but yeah, it's a really big deal to arrive in um, in a new country.

It's a new language. So we knew how to speak English, but that part was really, really challenging because there is um, okay. The language, the. There is the visa situation as well.

That makes a big difference because for example, when we started when we talked to the U S embassy, how it works is that you have to come here for three months, test the idea invest, and then present to them like a whole file and they decide if it's worth it or not. So the meaning is you have to invest all your money, all your energy into one project, and then pray and hope that uh, you know, the embassy will allow you to start this business.

so yeah, that's, that's an important part of uh, of the project for.

[00:05:41] **David Crabill:** Okay. So you're basically just trying to create a proof of concept in the first three months of living here. what did you do? I mean, what were your first steps in trying to show the embassy that this was something that was a viable business for you.

[00:05:55] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, very, very intense three months. So we started at an Airbnb back in Los Angeles. This was in 2017 then And when we arrived first, it wasn't macarons, because we didn't know it was so popular here because in France we know there is like lots of macaron shops.

but we didn't, we didn't know the culture here. And what you guys like, So what we did at first is coming from a startup I wanted to do some meetups with local people and meet people, and have them try all kinds of pastries uh, that we will have made directly from the Airbnb uh, oven and see how they like it, which one makes more sense to start as a business we did like three to

four meetups a week for about three or three weeks or one month to see what, what is the feedback, you know, for each pastries. and the first feedback that we got is the macaron were very, very popular. And yeah, and, and I knew from the beginning that, you know, to start a business, you don't have to start.

With every kind of pastry, you have to enter a business with a niche with only one pastry and see focus, be an expert on this one. And then you start others, you know, because we are just two person So yeah, the idea of these meetups was really to find what was our most valuable product. And this was macarons.

[00:07:22] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I did see that you started with the meet-ups app and you were just, I mean, you weren't looking for meetups for bakers, right? You're looking for any kind of meetup that would just invite you to join them, right?

[00:07:36] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, it was, it was a funny moment. We, we, we wanted to meet regular people, you know, nothing about bakers, just regular people to see what's their tastes. and a funny story is that we ended up one day. twin pregnant woman group. So like there were 10 pregnant women with twins in the group.

And we didn't know that. So we arrived like with, you know, lots of pastries and say you know, we contacted you and this is just to it's, it's just free. You guys tasted and just give us some feedback. and yeah, we ended up staying the whole, you know, it, wasn't really good to arrive to say, okay, give me a feedback and just leave.

So we just uh, we just stayed there for two hours listening you know, twin pregnancy issues and health stuff. So it was, it was an interesting moment.

[00:08:25] **David Crabill:** Uh, that's pretty funny. All right. So what was your initial feedback? I guess you were learning that the macarons were really, really in demand.

[00:08:34] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes. So the macaron was really popular, you know, we didn't really have to introduce them to the audience and other kinds of pies and other kinds of things that we made, it was necessary to introduce it. And something else that we realized is the gluten-free situation here in the United States in Europe, in France, People really don't care about the gluten-

free thing. You know, we didn't even know what was gluten when we first arrived. So we realized that it's a really big deal here.

And the good luck for us is that macarons are naturally gluten free. And even in the beginning, we didn't know that because we didn't focus on this. So yeah, the macarons a most valuable product and the gluten-free feedback was the two big important moments that we get from this early days uh, situation.

[00:09:29] **David Crabill:** So you got these meetups under your belt. You've gotten feedback from people, who are pregnant with twins and you're using your oven. You're not even, you don't even have a home kitchen to work with.

Really it's a pretty amazing story, but what was your next step in uh, trying to test this out?

[00:09:47] **Anthony Rosemond:** so the meetups, we did that for a month, I think, And then uh, we started focusing on starting the business. we find out, okay, what is the most valuable product? Okay macarons. Now we have to test the product.

We have to test it really. As a business, our people are going to buy it? For how much? What is the kind of flavor they like, you know, continuing in this way. So we started the three farmer's markets. One is in Costa Mesa. There was one is in Newport Beach. And the last one was in Malibu. And the idea now was to confirm that there is an interest for macarons. And the second objective was to find out what kind of flavors do you guys like? You know, because we have an idea of what French people like, but we did that. We didn't know what kind of flavor was liked here. So yeah, the next step was farmer's markets.

[00:10:40] **David Crabill:** And I mean, what was the reception like at the markets?

[00:10:43] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, it was, it was, it was great for us, you know, we, we didn't expect to earn, even if it was a small amount of money, but still we, we, you know, people were buying our products. So this was uh, a first success I would say for us because yeah, people are giving us money from something that we made and they're happy about that.

So the reception was really good. Feedback was great. We started to ask, you know, we did kind of like a paper where people can put their email and put

their preference in terms of flavor, and little by little, we started to get some strong I would say product behavior, you know, like a buyer persona.

And we noticed like, you know, the kind of colors, the kind of flavor that people like. And little by little, we started focusing on, on those.

[00:11:34] **David Crabill:** So, yeah, I noticed you have some pretty unique flavors now. I don't know what it was like in the beginning, but what were you learning? Like what, what were the flavors and colors that people really liked?

[00:11:45] **Anthony Rosemond:** You know, in the beginning, our idea was to get some. Fancy kind of flavor that we, that you can have in France. But you know, here we, we, we learned that it was more, you know, we need to have the basics, we need to have the basics and the classics, for example, salted caramel is a classic chocolate is a classic tiramisu passion fruit, when it's summertime you know, this kind of stuff, because in the beginning we started with, like, for example, there was a pickle pier.

It was interesting, but you know, it's maybe it's too complicated. so yeah, we kind of learned that, okay, we need a base of classic flavors, so it's going to be like, yeah, vanilla, strawberry, chocolate, tiramisu, salted caramel, things like that. And then in addition, we're going to do one or two additional maybe seasonal flavor just to keep, you know, the, the menu interesting

[00:12:38] **David Crabill:** And I noticed that you also were thinking about the subscription box at the beginning.

[00:12:44] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes. our idea was to send like monthly once a month and you French pastry. So this month's macarons next month's crepes, next month's, I dunno, apple pie and, and things like that.

So this was, this was the original business model, but like I said, when we realized that at first macarons are the very, very most popular French pastries here we said, okay, let's, Let's focus on this one first and see how it goes. And then we will add, you know, more pastries to the, to the menu as well after.

[00:13:16] **David Crabill:** Yeah, See, this is what I really like about your story. Anthony is. I mean, I can see that you've become extremely successful now. And you started from a very humble place. you had some ideas about what you wanted to do, but you were really listening to people and trying to figure

out what they wanted and you were adapting your business vision to that. Would you agree with that statement?

[00:13:37] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, definitely. you know, you, sometimes you think you have a good idea, but until you sell it to people and people are giving you the feedback and say, okay, we give you this five-star because we like the product. You really don't know what you're doing yet. So yeah, adaptation is really. The most key, valuable skill that you have to have, I guess. And yeah, listening to people, for example, in the farmer's market. I don't know if you check our website at pastreez.com. On each product page, you can select your own flavor.

So it means like it's not like an flavor assortment. You can select, if you want 24 salted macarons because you are salted Caramel person and you want salted caramel macarons. For example, this is the kind of feedback we got from a farmer's market. Person, his name was Mike he told me you might be interested to have this feature in your website.

and yeah, and we transformed this feedback into a feature on our website a few weeks after. and yeah, each, each order is really unique in this.

[00:14:38] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I did see that on your website. And it's, it's one thing to just offer customization or custom options on a website, but the way you've done it really, really impressive. I mean, you can like add things to your box and they appear, you know, in like a little grid in real time. I mean, it's, encourage people to go up to your website to see it.

I mean, it's really, really unique and kind of a fun way of customizing your box. how did you get that? I mean, it seems kind of technically advanced. Are you a developer or how did you get that implemented?

[00:15:10] **Anthony Rosemond:** Now for this one, I had to add extra help. Yeah. I have a background in development, but I'll be honest. I'm not skilled to do something like on the website. So I used freelancer.com and [Upwork](http://Upwork.com) as well. And

it's always messy in the beginning because you get all sorts of people and you don't know really if they are skilled or not, but once you find one or two people that you can trust, you know, you give them a few small, small tasks before, and then the good luck that was, I found the exact person that needed that,

that was needed for this job, because he already did something like that for another website.

So after maybe days, maybe, maybe weeks of looking for someone like that, that was skilled enough to do this. I found the perfect guy and yeah, we made, we made it work.

[00:16:00] **David Crabill:** So you started the farmer's market and I guess, you know, you had to put a presentation together or something, and the embassy obviously approved you. Was there anything significant about that?

[00:16:11] **Anthony Rosemond:** not really, there was the first three months, so February to maybe may something, then I had to go back and come back again for another three months because it wasn't enough for us to test the whole thing. So we did that for six months.

So that means that we arrived back in maybe September. we, we go back to Paris, we put our file together and usually people that does investment visa that's, that's what we did. Usually you'll have a lawyer that takes care of that. We weren't comfortable with that. It was too expensive for nothing.

So I wasn't comfortable paying, you know, \$10,000 for, for that. I think we were smart enough to do it ourselves. So that's what we did. And at that point, the embassy gave us one year.

So from September, 2017 to September, 2018 to, okay, it's like an extra test, you know, but a longer test. So that was the first step. And then in 2018, we had to come back, present a file again, and then we got five years. So that's the whole situation with the embassy.

[00:17:25] **David Crabill:** Wow. That's, that's just amazing. These are things that, you know, most of my listeners don't have to deal with, and it's just kind of crazy to hear the hurdles you've had to go through just to get this thing off the ground.

[00:17:39] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, and to add a little extra info on this one. Back in 2018, I had an open heart surgery. The, they have to replace my aortic valve. So I had to uh, go back to France, do this surgery. It was, you know maybe few weeks, few months after I had to stay in the hospital. And then just

when I get out of the hospital, that was the moment when we had to do the five, you know, to renew for five years. So it was an intense year here.

[00:18:09] **David Crabill:** Wow. That is that's crazy.

So you started at the farmer's market, you know, you're starting to build a customer base. started building an email list, the farmer's market, correct?

[00:18:21] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah. I wanted really to capitalize on what we were doing at the farmer's market, because I knew at some point it was just temporary. You know, the objective of the farmer's market was not really to make money out of it. It was more to get a feedback and, and um, you know, help build the online store.

So my objective was really to get people's emails to stay in touch with them, for new flavors, for uh, uh, maybe new products coming. You know, so that was, yeah, that was a way to keep in touch with my current customer back when we were switching to online.

[00:18:57] **David Crabill:** So when people came to the farmer's market to buy something, how did you get them to give you their email address?

[00:19:04] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah. So it was like a paper that was, you know, on the stand. And it was like an extra macaron for every email, something like that. So if you buy seven macarons, you can, you know, you, you get eight and you leave your email address. So it was just a quick incentive, you know, to have people yeah.

Give us their email address, I guess.

[00:19:22] **David Crabill:** So just one macaron for free with their order, if they gave you their email address and did most people actually give it to you or was there any resistance to that?

[00:19:34] **Anthony Rosemond:** No, not really, because we were very clear that, you know, the email address was kind of a win-win situation. You can unsubscribe any time. It's just that we wanted to keep them in touch with new upcoming flavors. And yeah, usually, you know, people, we, we, you know, by farmer's market, it was maybe 15 to 20 emails.

So every week we did three farmer's markets. So you see it's like 60 emails in a week. So yeah, it can add up very quickly, you know, for a small business.

[00:20:05] **David Crabill:** So fortunately for you, I mean, California implemented a cottage food law about five years before you started this business. let's just say there hadn't been a cottage food law, you know, a lot about commercial bakeries now.

How do you think you would have faired? Do you think you still would have tried to start this business? If you hadn't been able to start from home?

[00:20:23] **Anthony Rosemond:** at the beginning, we didn't even know there was the cottage food law thing. So we found uh, it's a shared kitchen, you know?

So you pay by the hour you go, you bake and that's that. But we realized it was very, very expensive. to make pastries. it's really on point, you know, you have to be an exact temperature. You have to be an exact timing and the oven was used for baking, but also for, you know, roasting chicken, for example.

So the, the ovens were not calibrated enough plus the expensive things. So yeah, that got me started looking into other options and that's where I found out about the cottage food law. So that was a huge I would say huge step that we took because from home, you can really uh, you know, your tools, you know, your equipment you feel safer. You feel in your comfort zone to do that. And for baking standpoint, you really need to, to be in your comfort Yeah, so that was a huge step for us.

[00:21:28] **David Crabill:** so how long were you working from home? I know you moved it into an online business where you do shipping nationwide. But how long were you actually just doing stuff out of your home kitchen before you actually scaled up into a commercial space?

[00:21:43] **Anthony Rosemond:** Uh, It was few months because you know, for online, you can't really ship your products with the cottage. So we had to go back to the shared kitchen. So I think we stayed uh, like that maybe for six months. And we still kept the farmer's market still. So we were kind of in the middle, you know, we were still using the cottage for the farmer's market. And then when we started to get online orders, we had to, we had to go back to the um, the shared kitchen.

[00:22:15] **David Crabill:** So, I know you don't do the farmer's markets anymore, but um, if you can remember back, you're doing three of them. How much were you making at each one of these markets on a given day?

[00:22:27] **Anthony Rosemond:** It will be an average \$200 per market, \$200. Yeah. But the most, the, the most complicated thing I would say is that at the time we had only one car. And so my wife goes to Costa Mesa and I had to rent a car and goes all the way to Malibu, which was like two hour drive to go and two hours to come back.

So it was, you know, if we wanted to focus on line, we really needed to, to slow down on the farmer's market afterwards, because we didn't have the energy of time to do both. You know, with just two person.

[00:23:02] **David Crabill:** and moving this into an online business was the goal from the very beginning. Right?

[00:23:07] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes.

[00:23:09] **David Crabill:** Okay. So. take us through, you you're putting up a website and trying to get these online orders in place. And you said it started slow. What'd you do to start ramping up business on the website.

[00:23:22] **Anthony Rosemond:** So the first thing is really SEO. It's search engine optimization. So that's the thing that I'm aware of. I know how to do that. I wasn't that skilled at the time, but I knew it existed. So like, I teach myself, you know, online to do something like that. And the first, the very first thing that we did was to check on the online market.

So one tool that's very useful for that. It's called S E M rush. It's a website and you can type any kind of Google keywords and it tells you, okay, these keywords are typed like 50,000 times a month by people in the U S so for example, for us, we use the keywords "macarons near me", because this is a really strong buying intent keyword.

So we wanted to know, okay, how many people type that online every month. So we figured out it was at the time it was about 50,000 people. So we said, okay, let's see if we can get some of these 15,000, 50,000 people visiting pastries. And so I focused on these keywords uh, you know, optimizing the pages from our website to match

these keywords and little by little, after a few months, we started to get traffic because of that technique. so it was um, yeah, it, was the moment where we realized, okay, online, we can do something with this store.

[00:24:49] **David Crabill:** so it's one thing to, to start a website to start trying to, you know, do SEO, get people to come to the website get orders. a whole nother thing to actually be shipping these out. I mean, macarons are fragile, right? I mean, this seems like it would be a pretty large learning curve to, to get to the point of being able to ship nationwide.

[00:25:14] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, that was uh, the first big challenge. Uh, There was two challenge when we started online, the volume and the shipping the volume because okay. We know how to make macarons. Okay. That's okay. But making like a batch of 48 is not the same as making 1000 within few days because it has to ship. So, and all that in an oven that was, you know, roasted chicken.

And it was, it was a nightmare in the beginning to be honest. but yeah, shipping was a real challenge. So we did some tests with that. Of course in, in the recipe part we, at the time there was like no dairy it's still gluten free. We don't use butter. You know, the butter is used in, in the filling. So it's a buttercream. But f or us, we use ganache. So instead of putting butter, we put chocolate chips and this makes a whole difference because it traveled better. It's less fat and it's more, you know, and smooth in the mouth.

So it's a really win-win-win for us. so that was the recipe part. And then we had to adapt the shipping experience, you know, we didn't know how they would arrive, how the macarons would arrive. It was fragile.

How many, how long in transit can they stay? So we did some tests with friends, you know, over in Florida, we say, okay, we send you this Macron for free, you send us a picture, you know, all these kind of tests. And months after months, we got more comfortable with this. but yeah, that was, that was a big challenge for us switching online.

[00:26:45] **David Crabill:** I mean, so what did you start with in terms of like, trying to package. and, and ship.

[00:26:50] **Anthony Rosemond:** So the beginning was we tried the USPS flat rate boxes. But it was too big after we realized we really need to make sure

that the package inside was not moving. So we had to put like air cushions inside. Then we realized that different states have different temperature. So we realized that we needed to, you know, add um, it's called uh, cool, pouch.

So we had to put the whole, macaron packaging inside an insulated pouch. Um, Yeah. And then we realized too that, you know, summertimes was more complicated than winter times. Of course. So sometimes we use the ice pack to make sure it stands, but we quickly realized that ice packs are really useless, especially for, for these macarons because the ice pack is, is really um, I would say psychological thing because they last maybe 12 hours.

And if your, your package transit for two or three, It really doesn't make any difference. so yeah, all of that together, and also what we did is, like I said before, we try to listen and see what other people are doing. So we checked our competitors at the time and we ordered from them and we checked how they were shipping those macarons,

and we kind of adapt, adapted their solution to our solution and making it all the way, I would say uh, to a good shipping experience. Yeah.

[00:28:18] **David Crabill:** And what were you holding the macarons in themselves?

[00:28:22] **Anthony Rosemond:** There is some clear packaging it's called like a blister. It's it's like a transparent, you know, container Uh, Yeah, the first, the first thing is that we didn't realize that in the beginning, in the beginning, we did some kind of custom packaging. That was a gift box with pastries logo embossed, and everything was pretty.

But the thing is, the box was too small. So it was supposed to be for 20 macarons, and we couldn't fit like 18, maybe 16. So it was a huge deal because at the time we bought for about 500 boxes was a huge purchase for us. So, and it was Christmas time. So we really had to make them fit. Uh, Once we figured that out we, okay. We were out of stock of these boxes, so the nightmare is over. So we said, okay, what's the kind of packaging that we can use.

And we found out this blisters and yeah, and that was the perfect uh, packaging for macarons because you can see through them, you know, macarons are a very usual visual pastry, so beautiful. You have different colors.

So it was important for you to see it for the customer to see it when they open the package. so yeah, we found out this about this blister, and then we stayed with this solution. That was working for us and it's still the case today.

[00:29:44] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And I see that you have some really fat, fancy packaging now. Like really nice boxes and the blister goes inside of them, but it looks like pretty expensive.

[00:29:57] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes, it's a pretty expensive box, but uh, today, now we have bigger volumes, so we can lower the, the price per box, but it was also important for us.

You know, macaroni is like a fancy pastry And when you give a gift of fancy stuff, you really need a fancy packaging. So yeah, we really wanted to keep an option on our website you know, to, to show that and to say, okay, this is a, this is a good pastry you have here. It has to be packaged beautifully as well.

So, so yeah, the package has to go with what's inside.

[00:30:36] **David Crabill:** You know, macarons, as you said, are really visual items and you really play to that because I see you use really bright colors. I feel like you use brighter colors than most of the macarons I see. often like really shiny. I don't know if you do anything to make that shine, if you do anything to make that even more shiny, but it feels like the colors and the branding of your entire business are just really bright and intentional. Would you say that's the case?

[00:31:04] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah. Yeah. Thanks for that. So that's, that's actually the case. we really wanted to, you know, even with the logo to, to have some kind of authenticity but you know, still modern there is for example, , which is the famous uh, macaron brand in France which is pretty authentic, authentic, and, and old school, I would say you know, being French chef, there, there is no online French bakeries to this date that says macarons. So okay there is some awesome account shops. but it's more industrialized. It's more, I would say Americanized it's more funny flavors, you know, so you can have like fruity pebbles Frosties, or I've seen Snickers macarons.

So that's great. You know, that's great innovation. That's great uh, creativity, but that's not what we wanted to do. We really wanted to take the path of authenticity. Another differentiation that we have is for example, we only ship

fresh products. We don't even have a freezer. 99% of the bakery you would order online.

And I know that for a fact, because I've reviewed most of them on the website. They ship frozen products. So there is nothing wrong doing that. It's just, you need to know what you get and we don't want to lie to the customer. So when we say we should fresh products, we really ship fresh macarons that were like made the same day or the day before.

And the thing is with usually other bakeries, I would say 99% because I haven't tried all of them, they ship it frozen.

And, um, the macarons, they would thaw uh, during transit. And that makes a huge difference to be honest because you know, in the thawing process, the ice start to liquefy and goes into water. And so it will wet the macaron shells. So you lose that little crunchy, you know, that signature macarons that you have crunchy outside and chewy inside.

You will lose this crunchy outside when you do that. So to come back to the subject, we really wanted to be authentic and ship fresh products. that's really how we wanted to differentiate ourselves from the others.

[00:33:12] **David Crabill:** Yeah, What was the pricing like? I mean, you were selling it at the farmers markets, what were you pricing there at? And then how did that change when you started to sell online and have to account for shipping as well?

[00:33:25] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, so the pricing was actually one uh, one thing we didn't talk about yet. for the farmer's market, we, you know, we, we check on competitors. Obviously we wanted to do something around, you know, Laduree or these famous brands. But still we were pretty new, so we needed to be quite below to give um, you know, to help people to give it a try.

Our objective was really to, you know, not be overwhelming because the brand wasn't really um, I would say established yet. So it was a good price point, but maybe like 25%, less than the big, the big brands you will see up there. And we started the same online. Online again, since it was a new um, sales channel, I would say at first we wanted to see if it works Like how do we even, how do we get paid? We didn't even know at the time we are in Shopify, but we didn't know if it was once a month or once a week, or when do they pay us? How

much do they take out a percentage, you know, for a fee on top of that. So we kind of followed our farmer's market price. So I think at the time it was for 24 macarons around \$45, maybe, you know, about, about \$2 per macaron.

And then for the shipping cost, it was a whole different story. I don't know if you want to get into that right now or not.

[00:34:44] **David Crabill:** yeah, one of the things with shipping and the reason why it doesn't work for most businesses, cottage food businesses that is because shipping is so expensive, but your products are high-end products. So I guess expensive enough that, you know, people are willing to pay the shipping costs for them.

[00:35:01] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes. So at first we started with USPS. And yeah, I mean, the, the pricing was, you know, the, there is two class for USPS, you have the first class and the priority mail. First class is under one pound and priority mail is over one pound and also priority mail usually arrive faster. So since most of the, the, the packages we were selling in the beginning, it was 12 macarons.

This was just under one pound. So for, you know, maybe listeners that have a business, they want to go online for shipping is really important to take care of that shipping problem right away. what is the way of your product with the packaging, like with the carton box, if it's under one pound and it's flat enough, you should be good.

But if it feels like, you know, bigger volume. you really need to find a way to optimize that in a way to optimize the cost as well.

[00:35:56] **David Crabill:** So, what were you spending about on shipping when you got started?

[00:36:01] **Anthony Rosemond:** For each package, it was maybe for a small, like first-class, it's usually between \$5 to \$6.

[00:36:09] **David Crabill:** And is that what you're spending now? Nowadays?

[00:36:13] **Anthony Rosemond:** The, a little bit less, because you know, with volume they give you like decrease that at checkout uh, since you can charge shipping. So we have free shipping over \$85, for example, because free

shipping is very important to get people to convert, but under a certain amount, Obviously you need to charge for shipping because you know, you have cost behind.

So um, if you charge, you know, under \$10, it's good enough for us, we charge about \$9 for shipping, So it's, you know, it's a pretty reasonable um, rate I would say. And something else I'd like to mention, we like to do a flat rate shipping, so it means like under \$85, whatever you, you buy, it will be the same cost.

It helps people, you know, okay. Realize that, okay, this is, this is my shipping cost and it's going to be the same. Unless I buy over \$85, which is going to be free shipping.

[00:37:05] **David Crabill:** So after that first Christmas season, I mean, did you just see sales keep picking up and growing as the SEO? I mean, what were you doing with the SEO? Were you just publishing blog posts? Is that you were trying to optimize for search?

[00:37:20] **Anthony Rosemond:** Not really. So for the, for the blog, I focused on two things. At first I didn't focus on blogs because at the time I didn't even know that that was a thing for SEO. Today's different. We have a strong blog, but at the time we didn't know. So the two things we focused on was optimizing our website.

And the second one was to get Authority, I would say important blogs, important reviewers to know us, to post about us. You know, so we can get pastries out there and people to get to know us. So the first thing we did probably

was the optimizing the pages with the keywords. So for example, macarons near me, or buy macarons online or things like that.

And each page we had on the site was focused on one keyword, for example. so yeah, that's, that's what I did on the first place. And then once the website was optimized enough, I would say I tried to do some outreach to uh, really important blogs and other smaller blogs because, you know, we like to share.

so like we say, Hey, we want to send you macarons for free. And if you can review us and post it online and say what you think about the products, so that's, that's usually what we did in the beginning for SEO.

[00:38:34] **David Crabill:** So you were just finding websites and contacting the owners and saying, Hey, I want to send you some free product were you then asking them to leave review or something.

[00:38:46] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes, exactly. That. So I was reaching out uh, um, I knew that bigger blogs, like BuzzFeed or blogs like that are usually really are to get on. So I really wanted to focus on, you know people that was, you know, kind of studying like us, but still had some audience. Uh, So it, so it can be, you know, a win-win, so they have like a good products to review, so it brings good content for them.

And for us, it was good because their audience was getting to know.

[00:39:15] **David Crabill:** How did you go about trying to find a website that would work well for that?

[00:39:20] **Anthony Rosemond:** Oh, yeah. That like you have lots of, for example, foodies blog. I would say, you know, you have some special website that does reviews for boxes. I also focused on subscription box reviewers because it's one of our main products, a subscription box. So yeah, you know, typing that into Google and see, okay, what are the different um, you know, small, smaller blogs that we can reach out because our strategy was, we don't want to pay for a blog post, you know, I'm not comfortable doing that.

Um, First we don't have the budget to do that, but second, I find it kind of biased, you know, so I really wanted. Them to review the actual products without any financial string attached. And yeah. And I guess that, that works well for us, that strategy at the beginning.

[00:40:08] **David Crabill:** All right. So yeah, people were impressed with your products. They chose to leave a review or write about you or something. And that generated back links to your website. And that started to build up your, you know, search engine optimization. People are now coming to the website. You know, it's one thing to get people to a website. It's another thing to get them to buy or to get their information so you can keep in touch with them. How did you optimize the website for the people who did.

[00:40:37] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes. So something that I like to do. is for example, we never do discounts. We don't have any discount, like, you know, 10% or 20% off. These days, you get a lot of these. When you arrive on the website, say, Hey, sign up give me your email and we give you 20%.

We don't do that. We do something that I consider better. We give away free products. So for example, for every orders, over \$42, you get seven macarons for free, which is um, 20 bucks of value. So this does plenty of things free products for me. So it's better than discounts because on the first place, it doesn't discount your brand.

You will never see a 10% of iPhone. For example apple never discount their products, but they might incentivize and gives you like a free gift card or something like that. So that's the first thing. It doesn't impact your brand's image because the problem with that is when you start giving up discounts people tend to look at your brand with a discount point of view.

It means that they will only buy from you only when you have a discount. you know, so that's very important. The second thing is that the perceived value of this offer seven in the eye of the customer is very, more important than getting a 10% or 20% because seven macarons for free has a \$20 off value,

which is amazing, you know, in your eyes, I can say, okay, I buy \$45 and I got, another product \$20 on top of that. So that's great in the view of the customers as well. And the last point is it's great as a business as well, because especially with macarons, since we ourselves do everything ourselves, you know, the recipe, the shipping, the website, we don't have that many costs on the line only, you know, the ingredients and the shipping costs.

So it means that adding seven macarons to an actual order doesn't really impact us that big cost-wise so that's, that's a win-win-win I would say it's a win for your brand image. It's a win for the customer and it's a win for us as a business.

[00:42:47] **David Crabill:** Yeah. I mean, seven macarons is a pretty substantial gift to give. And I guess what, what they're giving you in exchange is their email address.

[00:42:56] **Anthony Rosemond:** Exactly. Yeah. Now you have the email address and these days you can collect as well, the SMS, because you can, it's like a

new sales channel for, for marketing. So yeah, there's the SMS and the email as well.

[00:43:09] **David Crabill:** So you're, you're getting people to join your email list. And then from there you can keep marketing to them over time, I guess.

[00:43:17] **Anthony Rosemond:** yeah, the email is lots of stuff. Now we have like one newsletter a week because we don't want to get too overwhelming. But we really, you know, we don't send like spammy kind of newsletter. You just want to learn and know about what you subscribed for. So, which is macarons and French, French pastries.

So we reach out um, only when it makes sense. So for example Hey, we released the new crepes. This is the new link, a whole, this month, there's these two new flavor, which is maybe an strawberry galaxy cheesecake macarons, you know, things like that. For example, we released as well an online macaron class that we do every month. So we would like a newsletter about that.

[00:43:59] **David Crabill:** And. once they join your email list, do they get sent on an autoresponder sequence or something like that?

[00:44:07] **Anthony Rosemond:** Uh, Yes. So um, when you subscribe to the pop-up, which is the offer for the seven free macarons, there is uh, two options. I guess, if you buy straight away using the offer, then you're good to go. You know, there is no sequence of emails and if you uh, don't buy right away, which always happens for every website sometimes because you forgot or sometimes because you, you know, you change the subject or something.

So we send you like a reminder a day after, and then three-day after to, to help you with this you know, convert with this offer. And if that, after the three email, you, you out of the sequence, that's, that's pretty much it, you would just receive, you know, the, the weekly newsletter.

[00:44:47] **David Crabill:** How did you set this up so you can track people? I mean, what, what kind of software are you using or what product.

[00:44:53] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah. So we, we used to use what's called cm commerce, but now we switched to Klaviyo, which is I think on Shopify kind of the leader for email marketing. So it allows you to uh, yeah, to put like a pop-

up then it, it, you know, as, as long as you put your email inside, it's, it's getting to the Klaviyo database, and then it automatically triggers your email sequence.

For example, there is also an abandoned cart, email sequence. So if you reach checkout and then uh, you about the new cart, there is an automatic email sequence that will remind you about this card. And you can also send newsletter from Klaviyo. Yeah, there is plenty of options inside for email marketing.

[00:45:41] **David Crabill:** Yeah, and I know you're an engineer, so you, you probably love this stuff. But most people listening to this, probably just, they're more focused on making the product. Like I assume Yami is, is more interested in, in making the macarons than doing all this SEO stuff and optimization and email campaigns and everything.

And, and then definitely your business I'm sure would not be where it is today, if it weren't for you kind of putting this dedicated focus into it online. But what would you say to someone who, you know, maybe, you know, a Yami who doesn't have an Anthony as a husband, like, what would you say to someone who just trying to do this all on their own and they're the ones making the product and marketing the product. do you think is most important for them to focus on.

[00:46:34] **Anthony Rosemond:** That's a, that's a great question. Before pastries, I started another kind of startup when I was back in Paris and that failed because I was alone doing this. So my, only advice and always the same that I repeat is you have to team up, you know, find someone that's focused as you are. And that has the skills that you don't.

you know, sometimes we find like I, I had a friend that just recently opened a restaurant in Australia and he confirmed that to me, that, you know, opening a restaurant is not only about having a good recipe or, you know, everyone's telling me I do the best Columbo.

I do the best I don't know, apple pie or something. It's not only about that restaurant, a restaurant. On the first place, it's a business. So you have to price it wisely. You have to have consistency in your um, you know, quality of the food. You have to be there as a business. Like how do people find you or how do people buy your products?

Can they review it? How do you plan to grow and what is the cost of your ingredients? You know, all that into consideration makes um, like the kitchen part, only one piece of the puzzle. So really Starting like we did that farmer's market.

You don't really need to have any kind of business people around or marketing because, you know, it's just about to get feedbacks But then when you really want to, you know, put it together and say, okay, this is serious. Now I tested the idea. I know it's good. People are good feedbacks about it.

Now it's time to take it more seriously and see, Hey, what is my strategy to uh, grow this as a business? So that's, yeah. My advice is always to, to, to find someone because no one really success alone, you really need to be a team.

[00:48:21] **David Crabill:** Yeah. And I'd say that's a particularly true for a business like yours, where you've grown it nationwide. I see you have 112,000 followers on Instagram. I mean, you've really gone big with it and it seems like you're just trying to get even bigger. So um, definitely. That's not a one person business

[00:48:41] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, exactly. So, you know, we come a long way. I know it's difficult sometimes to start, we don't know everything. sometimes, you know, people tend to think that you need a lot of money to start a business. We didn't have a lot of money and we really come from far away.

And I think people tend to dream more, which is great, but you still have to, I think it's still great to keep your feet on the ground and say, okay, let's start small.

Maybe sometimes we want things to fast and you don't even know the feedbacks of your customers and you want to sell nation-wide or things like that. So for, in our experience is, to start small. We don't aim to be a, you know, a competition of Amazon and be a crazy billionaires. We just want to continue to do what we like to do at a pace that our customers are happy.

And most importantly, we don't want to industrialize anything. Most of our competitors, they, like I said, they ship frozen things because they just have volumes. And then, you know, that's how it goes when you've got stock

volumes. So if we, if having more volumes means shipping frozen products, we don't want to go there.

We want to stay this, family owned business, that ship authentic fresh products. That's why we want to stay.

[00:49:59] **David Crabill:** I was wondering, you know, you do have such a huge following on Instagram and, uh, you know, 112,000 followers of today. I mean, did you do to build up that kind of following? I mean, I do see on Facebook, you only have like 2000 followers, which is still a lot, but I mean, what have you tried doing specific things to grow your Instagram following?

[00:50:23] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes, I did. you know, macarons are a very visual thing. Like we, like we said before, I was thinking what's, what's the most visual platform and it's definitely Instagram for, for that kind of products.

So when we first started, you know, we started with zero, of course, we, we wanted to promote our products and I wanted to do some kind of lifestyle picture, you know, some like taking picture of Yami, eating a macaron in the park or something like that. It wasn't working that well. So I did the same kind of, you know, it's the same kind of path that we did with the business.

You always want to test, then listen, then apply and then the retest and apply in the retest. So you keep applying the things that works and you keep on trying to test new things, and then you apply as well. And you keep on growing with this, this wheel. So what we did is we see that this wasn't working.

So we said, Hey, let's try um, some videos about uh, you know, macaron making videos. then it, it starts to, it's like we get maybe a hundred thousand views on a video, lots of comments, people trying to ask, wanted to ask us, how do we do what's the secrets? And that's actually where I found. Way to grow the Instagram, because most people on Instagram are really asking us about how to make macarons.

And that actually made us kind of a switch in the business. We kept the macarons, of course, but we invented new products to fit to this new audience.

[00:51:52] **David Crabill:** Yes. So the people who are following you on Instagram, aren't necessarily even interested in buying. They're kind of home cooks themselves. I did see that you are offering classes.

[00:52:04] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yep. Exactly. We are offering classes and we also developed uh, some eBooks, you know, to help people all over the world to, to make macarons at home. And that's because of Instagram. I, I would have never think about that. Because most of the people on our community and Instagram I would say 90% is really focused on making macarons. It's not about buying macarons.

[00:52:26] **David Crabill:** Well, I've had a number of podcast guests on that have run classes because they're experts in their field, they're all doing pretty much physical in-person classes, but your classes are all virtual. Right.

[00:52:40] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yep.

[00:52:41] **David Crabill:** So how has it trying to run these virtual classes and what do you price them?

[00:52:47] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah. So the, the ticket price is \$69 for the macaron class. And the thing is, is that, you know, on Instagram, you not only have people from your local area, The objective was really to help the majority of it. And when we check on the Instagram statistics, we can see that we have people from, you know, Argentina uh, United States, Australia, England, all over the world. So it wouldn't be fair to offer, you know, a physical class. So what happened is that.

Yeah, we developed this class. We opened a zoom meeting. So we made the recipe to fit into one hour because the recipe takes more than one hour. And most importantly is we don't want you to bake at the same time. So I think the physical class that's that people are usually doing that everybody bake at the same time.

And you can go and check for macarons if you want to do that, if you spend hours and hours. So we really wanted to find a way that is, you know, condensed enough to fit in one hour because you know, people are busy. You don't want to spend days into a recipe and still making it very interesting. So we share all our secret tips we share.

What's, what's important and what's, what's really key to make macarons. For example, humidity is the worst enemy of macarons. So, you know, we kind of listed all the, the steps and. You know, in front of your camera, you can take a note and we answer every single question at the end of the webinar. So yeah, so that's, that's, that's the path we took for the online class.

[00:54:24] **David Crabill:** So you built up the website, you know, turn that into very, very profitable and successful business. You know, built up Instagram, you have this running classes, and then you went in a direction that I don't know if you were anticipating, but you opened up a storefront, right.

[00:54:44] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yes.

[00:54:45] **David Crabill:** was that something that you were expecting to do or planning to do? Um, You know, how did that all come to be?

[00:54:53] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah, remember when we talked about the shared kitchen. It doesn't make sense when we spend every day in the kitchen, it doesn't make sense to pay someone it's better to have your own you know, facility. So yeah, we anticipated. Open this brick and mortar because of the production. One thing to notice though, is we allow pickup in this location, but you still have to order online. So it's not open to the public for, you know, working and stuff like that. So I would say it's more of a commercial kitchen that we do pickups more than, you know, than an actual shop, I would say.

So it's really production-wise that it makes more sense for us. And also the second thing is that it really allows us to have an impact locally as well. So, because we live in the high desert in California, it's kind of a rural area. And it was important for us because, you know, neighbors were always asking us about the macarons and stuff.

So it was important to us to kind of give back to the community as well. So now from the website, you can order online to ship or to pick up in Phelan, California, and we're pretty proud of that.

[00:56:04] **David Crabill:** and what's the next, you know what I mean? Is it just this that you're focusing on, but where do you see yourself going in the next few years?

[00:56:13] **Anthony Rosemond:** the initial objective of pastries, obviously with the, you know, the name of the brand is to bring authentic French pastries wherever you are in the U S so there is , there is crepe and there's going to be probably Madeleine apple pie and all kinds of French pastries.

Our objective is really to become the, the one stop shop where you can buy really authentic French pastries.

[00:56:40] **David Crabill:** So you know, you, you obviously moved all the way from France and decided to start this business that's really taken off and it's impressive what you've done to build it. What keeps you going, why do you love running this business?

[00:56:54] **Anthony Rosemond:** You know each of us Yami and I, we, we do what we like to do every day. I love doing, you know, research about the business marketing. It's, it's my thing. So I really like to do that every day and on Yami side it's the same. She she's, passionate about what she does and that's in the first place.

That's why we started the business. So I think when you do something you like. you know, you don't, you don't really get tired of what you're doing. And something funny that I will always say is that for us, there is no Monday or Friday or Sunday, for us everyday is kind of the same. We never really know what day is today. Maybe it's Wednesday maybe it's Sunday yeah, it's, it's like a journey that never kind of stops. so yeah, I guess passion is all about that journey for us.

[00:57:42] **David Crabill:** Awesome. Well, it's pretty impressive what you have built and where you're going. Um, if people want to learn more about you find you online how can they reach out?

[00:57:54] **Anthony Rosemond:** Yeah. So you can go to pastreez.com. We have an online chat there. Uh, We also have an email which is hi@pastreez.com. Or you can also go to our Instagram it's uh, at pastries and send us a DM. We are always happy to share.

[00:58:14] **David Crabill:** yeah. Thank you so much for coming on and sharing with us today.

[00:58:16] **Anthony Rosemond:** Thanks David.

[00:58:19] **David Crabill:** That wraps up another episode of the Forrager Podcast. In this episode, I really focused on Anthony and Yami's overall business journey, and didn't dig too deeply into some of the more advanced online strategies that Anthony has implemented, but he is featured on other podcasts and blogs where he goes more in depth into some of these strategies. So I've included links in the show notes if you'd like to learn more.

For more information about this episode, go to forrager.com/podcast/48.

And if you enjoyed this episode, please head over to apple podcasts and leave me a review. A review is the best way to support the show and will help others find it as well.

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Thanks for listening. And I'll see you in the next episode.