



On Their Way Show Notes & Transcript:
Episode 201: Jah Stacey (Or How To Build A Streetwear Brand)

Show Notes

Episode Summary: Jah Stacey, founder of the Tampa-based streetwear brand, Yampa International, sits down with host, Jade Madison Scott, to discuss how he built and continues to expand his streetwear brand. He shares how he connected with retailers for in-store distribution, how he markets his products on social media, and more.

Guest Information:

- Yampainternational.com
- [Yampa International Twitter](#)
- [Yampa International Instagram](#)

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EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

‘On Their Way’ Theme Song composed by Bajio Alvarado
(It’s light and energetic. It puts a little pep in your step)

Jade (JMS): Hey everyone. It’s Jade Madison Scott and I am happy to be back for season two of On Their Way. This season we are focusing on what I think is the most wonderful anything in the whole continental U.S. of A, Tampa Bay, Florida.



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JMS: As a Tampiean, I'm really excited to show off all the talent that thrives in my hometown. Our first guest is Jah Stacey, founder of clothing brand, Yampa International. Jah's gonna talk about how he created his brand, the unique way he fosters business relationships, his marketing strategies and more. As always transcripts are at wgcprouductions.com and remember this is a WGC Production.

'On Their Way' Theme Fades

JMS: Jah Stacey created Yampa international in 2016. The idea originally began as a shirt printing shop. After visiting Los Angeles and experiencing the fashion culture, the vision became bigger. Jah brought his vision back to Tampa, Florida, and started a brand, Yampa international. Hey Jah. How you doing?

Jah: Hey, how's it going? Happy to be here.

JMS: It's going really great. And I'm happy that you're happy to be here. Okay. So let's hop right into it. So, the season's all about Tampa, so we know where you're from in that aspect, but I do want to know where your roots?

Jah: Uh, so, I hail from Jamaica, Queens, New York. The big Apple, but I came down to Florida when we were like....I was probably... it was probably like '94 when we first came down here, but I've always moved back and forth between the two. So, I probably moved back to New York, maybe like four or five times. So, I didn't lose my accent. I didn't lose my culture. So I'm Southern, but not completely Southernized just yet.

(Jade Laughs)

JMS: Okay. So in the biography, it said that you started Yampa international as a street printing shop, but then after you went to LA, you wanted to expand into a brand.



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JMS: So, could you kind of talk to us, and could you explain the difference between a street printing shop and a “brand” and how you came to develop that?

Jah: Basically I started off just doing graphics, and I ended up kind of entering into this artsy style, like graphics. And I would just upload those online, just trying to like, you know, land some sort of gig. Eventually that just kinda led to a stockpile of graphics. I was just like, “you know, maybe I can try and, like, sell them as, like, prints or on a t-shirt or something.” You know, a very small mentality at the time cause I really didn't have any type of bigger vision for it.

I ended up going out to California around my birthday, it was maybe like four years. So, I have another friend that lives out there and we used to go to a Pinellas Park Middle School together, and so I ended up linking up with them while I was out there. So, my friend and my father, who was meeting us out there, they ended up getting hit by a blizzard in New York. So, they ended up being stranded. So it was just me and my brother out in Cali, and all of our plans kind of, you know, were halted. So, we stayed in Arcadia, which is like, almost like Chinatown in a sense. We're out there and Asian fashion is way up there. You know, as far as like Tokyo and, you know, just all of Japan and stuff, um, and even parts of China.

So, I'm just seeing all of this different style fashion, which kind of really spoke to me cause I've always been like a person of style, but my style isn't always...I wouldn't say welcomed, but you know, people always kind of thought it was weird how I would dress. So when I saw them dress out like that, where this guy literally had on this, not really reflective, you know, like those, like, it was like, visor style sunglasses. I can't think of what the-

JMS: Like, aviators?

Jah: Almost like that, you know? And it would almost look like one of those, like double-sided mirrors that's on the buildings.

JMS: Oh, I see. Yes.



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Jah: He had a whole entire outfit like this, and I was just like, wow, I love this guy right here. Bor, that is exactly the freedom that I wish to have with fashion. But again, you know, I'm living in Clearwater at the time. So, you know, Clearwater isn't fashion forward at all.

(Jade Laughs)

JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: Like, you know, it's...it's the beach.

JMS: Yeah, it's tourist casual.

Jah: Exactly. You know, thong slides and, you know, surfer shorts, like stuff like that. So, when I was over there and, I'm, you know, I'm seeing just all of this fashion and culture and everything, and...so a little background about my friend. Yeah, we went to school together, at a point, you know, they had a kid, like, really early, like maybe like 11th grade. They fell into drugs really heavily and they got themselves.

JMS: That's great.

Jah: So they're telling me their story and I'm just like, “wow, that's crazy, you know? They were, like, “yeah, got off the drugs, buckled down and started taking care of my kid, went and got my GED, went to college, became a financial analyst, started doing so good, you know? I worked for Bank of America and they decided they wanted to relocate me to California.” And they said something to me that stuck with me.

They said, “yeah, I'm hoping to be making about 45 every month.” And I was like “man, 4,500? That's, that's beautiful. A month?”



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JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: They were like, “no, 45,000.” I'm really self-aware, so at that moment I realized how small I've been trained to think; that 45,000 a month sounded crazy and it sounded impossible, especially for people like us coming from where we come from. And to see that and to exist in that realm of their thinking and their energy and confidence in saying that it made me almost like, like, rethink every small thought that I ever had and decided to make it bigger

Jah: And actually act on it instead of keeping it in the idea phase. So, I began working on the brand. I actually took my financial aid-

(Jah Laughs To Himself)

Jah: And legitimized the whole entire business and bought all the merchandise and the heat press and a vinyl cutter and, you know, started marketing and stuff like that, and shout out to SPC [Saint Petersburg College].

(Jade and Jah Laugh)

JMS: Huh. So, how exactly, in your own words, would you describe Yampa International and the brand that it represents?

Jah: Let's see. Ultimately, uh, I would want to describe it as a representation of Tampa's culture, but on an international scale. So, ultimately we get so much tourism here, people from all around the world. And I mean, I see people from everywhere, and I go back home to New York and I'll say, “you know, Hey, I'm from Clearwater, Florida,” you know, not, not like in that context, necessarily, but you know, “yeah, I live in Clearwater.” And it's like “Oh, what's that?” “Oh, Tampa. I live where the Bucs play.” “Oh, okay. Well, isn't it country down there? Like, they kind of slow down there? Are they a little behind down there?”



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JMS: Not the disrespect.

(Jade Laughs)

Jah: Yeah, like all the time, you know?

JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: And so I wanted to have something that would represent us in a way that says we have culture, you know? We have a voice. We have an impact. Uh, we're not just someplace you come through, hit the beach really quick, and go home. You know, we have music here. We have art here. You know, we, we fashion here. We have a sneaker culture here, you know? I, I wanted to try and cover all of those bases as best I could, so I wanted to create a brand that represented that.

When you hear Yampa, I want them to think, “Oh, you remember that night?” Or “you remember that outfit that such-and-such-” or “aw, that painter is from there.” You know, something that represented all of those things that people think we don't have here.

JMS: Hmm. I completely understand that. That's why I'm doing this season of the podcast, cause we just...there's so much talent in Tampa. It's ridiculous.

So, then that brings up a question of, and I'm sure you've seen this around, but Tampa is gentrifying. They've renamed Channelside, the area up by University Mall is rapidly changing. You can see it all over the city, how things are changing.

Jah: Yes.

JMS: So, since Tampa's culture is changing, is the brand of Yampa International changing as well to fit that? How is that dynamic working with you?

Jah: Um, I think that it is evolving with it and I think that's just, you know, natural growth. Uh, I wouldn't say it's like, like changing necessarily.



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Jah: It's almost like, like, you know, you, you turn 30 and automatically you *think* you're supposed to have to change or become something that you never had to be before, and that's just not the case. Um, it's supposed to just be organic.

Um, you grow with everything, the things you learn, the things you experience, you know, your thirst for certain things, the things that you used to care about, or you feel yourself becoming a better person, you're more aware, you're more conscious. That is more the trajectory of Yampa that we don't...I don't, I don't see us having to really change with anything is going to be an organic growth because we just want to represent the culture, and with that in mind, whenever there is a, a cultural shift, if you're doing everything correctly, it's a organic evolution, when those things are occurring.

JMS: Mhmm. And, like, when you picture somebody wearing one of your shirts or wearing a jacket of yours or anything that Yampa International has made, who do you see? What's your target demographic?

Jah: Let's see that. That is a good question. At first...I guess, I guess we all go through it. That we say, you know, “Oh, I want these kinds of people to wear it,” or “I want these kinds of people to wear it.” And it is important to know those things. I can't say that I've quite discovered it-

JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: Because I, I, I do my best to try and remain neutral. I'm not sure if that's a bad or good thing just yet. So, I do know that if you skate, this brand should speak to you. If you're into the music that I'm into, this brand should speak to you. If you appreciate art, this brand should speak to you. You know anything in those particular realms is the demographic that I am reaching.

For example, I did a fashion show in 2019, and a friend of mine asked, “ you know, I wanna invite people, but you know, I don't really know like who shouldn't, who should I invite? Like what kind of people are gonna, like, be there and stuff?” And my response to him, ultimately, was “if whoever you invite does not like gay people, don't invite them.



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Jah: If they are offended by, you know, transsexuals don't invite them. If they think fashion is weird or is just clothes or just a sneaker don't invite them. They have to be open-minded. They have to understand the culture. They have to understand artistic expression.

JMS: Okay. That's, that's interesting that it reaches who it reaches. So let's get on, let's get to the actual, let's get to the clothing. Let's get to the thick of it. You're a graphic designer. I know you designed some of the logos on the actual shirts. Are you the only designer for Yampa International or do you have others as well?

Jah: Yes, a hundred percent everything I do myself. I have worked with, um, artists such as, uh, Aaron Evans. He's based in Tampa. I've also worked with a local shop, their name is [Dynasty](#), uh, they're in Clearwater. So, we have done, like, collaborations with them, but for the most part, I'm a hundred percent behind every design, every creation, every single idea.

JMS: Okay. Then can you take us through your process of how you create a design for your, uh, for a t-shirt logo?

Jah: Yeah. So, um, with that process, it's always like a, uh, weird one. Like, I wish I could say that, you know, I sit down and, you know, I do this and then I do this thing and then the idea comes to me. It could be extremely spontaneous. I could literally just, you know, I could be at, Sparkman's Wharf or something like that, and I'm like, "man, I love the color of this grass," and that'll, like, start the concept. "Okay, what can I make with this colorwave?" So, I'll sit down. Uh, usually I smoke a cigar. This is cigar city, by the way-

JMS: Sure is.

Jah: For anybody who doesn't like that, we live in cigar city.



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Jah: So, I'll sit down and, you know, just throughout that process, I'm trying shapes just to kind of, like, create some sort of foundation of, you know, some sort of image. So, usually I'll just start with lines and shapes, but that color is the focal point at that moment. Then that can steer into, like, "Hmm, maybe the Power Ranger." So, now I'm working with this, like, Power Ranger thing or something, you know? So it, it all kind of always stems from something different, even down to, like, our logo. I was simply on an airplane flying back from California and you have to walk through [Tampa] International [Airport], and that sparked an idea.

If I'm on a schedule and I say, "hey, okay, everyday this week we do have to sit down and come up with something," that process is that way, but most of the time it rarely happens that way. I have some sort of inspiration from the outside and I just cannot get that image out of my head or this idea out of my head. And I have to just kind of figure out some way to bring it to life, and that's usually the foundation of that process, and, ultimately, just hope that I'm having on day, that every angle is just hitting exactly how I pictured it. Uh, some days I just cannot get the image to come together, uh, so I gotta sit aside for three or four days, maybe a week, and then it happens on that six day.

JMS: Hm. So, one thing I want to ask is I noticed on your website, when I was looking through your collections, you have some designs which were just singular designs and you have other designs that are part of larger collections. So, you had, you have a collection based on shoes, you have a collection based around, uh, vintage video games. So, how do you decide when a design should be a part of a larger collection? It should be expanded upon and when it should just stay as it's as like a solo project.

Jah: Yeah. That's an excellent question, actually. Um, And I just want to say what's beautiful about these types of conversations is I am not aware, sometimes, that it even happens that way because I'm just fully submerged in creation. So, at that time, a lot of those singular designs? That was me saying I'm a graphic artist, and I want people to just buy this. Um, so that was like earlier on in my career.



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Jah: So, while I was doing that, again I was sitting on so many different graphics that I was just putting out a design week, no type of marketing behind it, no type of direction or anything. It was just “I make really cool graphics, I think, so I'mma put this out and I think people are going to like it enough to buy it.”

Eventually, I slowed down with doing that and wanted to be able to actually market this item and have something behind it, some sort of momentum so I can propel it forward. So, some of those did just end up coming out as singular items, um, not a part of a collection, but it was more calculated, as I became aware of those things. So, then once in 2019, where momentum got so crazy, ultimately I ended up, um, getting back in touch with an old friend, and his name is [Cam That Dude](#). He used to work at 94.1 [*A popular Hip-Hop and Pop Radio Station in The Tampa Bay area*] but he just recently got a new gig in Gainesville. So, he ended up inviting me up to the radio station. I made a MLK shirt.

JMS: Oh, the one that goes like, I'm safe on any, any MLK like checkbox street Avenue. That one?

Jah: Yes. That one.

JMS: Gotchu.

Jah: So, he invites me up to the radio station and I go up there and I just thought it would be, like, a quick handoff, but he actually said “no, come upstairs, you know, meet everybody and stuff, blah, blah blah.” So, we go up there. I meet Joey Franchise [a 94.1 Radio Jockey]. I meet [DJ] Hurricane, and they shout me out on the radio and it just created this momentum behind the brand, you know, a certain level of curiosity came of that.

So that was also around the time I was, like, discovering all of this culture out here in Tampa. I ended up straying from my online market and I just went into face-to-face marketing and networking.



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Jah: I'm probably at like, like five or six events every week, trying to meet everybody that I could meet and network with whoever. I literally, I was stalking people's Instagrams, trying to figure out where they were going to be at-

(Jade Laughs)

Jah: And why are they're so, like, popular, you know? So-

(Jah Laughs)

Jah: I was like, "who is this person? I need to find out. Where are they going to be at? Okay. What's the name of this place? Where's that? Okay, cool. We're going out." And I would intentionally, like, run into these people just to start a conversation-

(Jah Chuckles)

Jah: And it sounds creepy, but that's what I had to do.

JMS: Well, if it worked it worked.

(Jah Laughs)

Jah: I had to work the system, you know? Throughout all of that, though, the momentum built so much that I couldn't just dish out one design. I had to become even more calculated with when I would release stuff because I started doing events. So, you know, we would vendor at these events and everything, and there's no way that, you know, I just made this shirt last week and I have a hundred of them at this show or even 10 of them, you know? It's too short notice. It's too quick a turnaround. So, it forced me to become more calculated with how I release stuff.



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Jah: So that's where collections started to happen more often, where, you know, let me do three different designs so when I go to these events, I'm presenting a collection versus, you know, a hoard of random items, cause you can't have medium, large, XL in every single one of these spontaneous designs, you know?

JMS: Mhmm. Okay. And how exactly do you determine the success of a design?

Jah: So, my bar is set extremely high. So at this point, I kind of struggle with that line of what's successful and what isn't just because I hold myself to a certain standard. Uh, so at this moment I feel like I have not been so successful. Even though the sales are there, the attention is there, I feel like I haven't achieved, um, anything successful just yet. Now don't get me wrong. I pat myself on the back often and I do celebrate my victories, even the small ones. I don't want to get to a point, though, where I slow down or I become laks, you know? "Oh, this was successful. And now I get to talk the talk and..." yeah, I don't want to become that person because I have so much more, I guess, road to travel or things to cover.

JMS: Hmm. So, we've talked about the design aspects. Let's move on to the actual manufacturing of the products. So, uh, how do you make your t-shirts?

Jah: I use quite a few different methods. So for example, the reflector jackets, I went through a manufacturer for those, so they did the whole cut and sew process for me.

JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: Once I received them, I applied vinyl to it. Um, so because the jacket was, it was a black base, the bottom half is black and then the upper half is reflective, so I added an aluminum style vinyl to the, um, blackened area. Um, at first I was afraid to, to print on the reflective portion of it. Someone reached out to me and wanted a custom. His name is Messiah. He's a local artist, and very talented by the way.



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JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: He reached out to me for a custom one and I was like, “Ooo, I don't know. I mean, I could try it, but if it burns up, it's on you”

(Jah Laughs)

Jah: “You still gotta pay for it.” So, he reached out and I was like, “you know what, for the sake of art, let's do it. Um, let's try it out.” And it actually worked. That was the vinyl/cut-and-sew process. I also use drop shipping. For people who don't know what drop shipping is, ultimately, it's a company who will receive the order from the customer, print it for you and ship it out to them. So, it's almost like an Amazon in a sense. If you want to think of it in that light. That process is direct-to-garment [DTG]. So, ultimately that's a huge printer that prints the ink directly into the fabric, and that's, you know, unlimited colors, which I love that process because it does not limit what I'm able to create. With vinyl and screen printing, you're limited to a certain amount of colors that you can layer ultimately, plus your order quantities typically have to be pretty large to get the best pricing. So, I ultimately use DTG most of the time. Again, that allows me to create whatever it is that I want and be confident that it's going to look exactly like what I created and sit on that garment.

JMS: And do these drop shipping companies, do they also put your logo on the bags? Cause when I ordered my shirt, that was one thing that I noticed that I really liked. Is that something they do as well?

Jah: Yeah. So, they ultimately can do whatever you require of them if they're good. They add the logo to the outside bag. They can add an inside logo. They can put sizing. They can put, you know, washing requirements. They can ultimately add all of that stuff to it. Now, as far as tagging stuff like that, you have to do yourself, or reach out to an embroiderer, Embroidery? Embroider? Yeah. Embroider.



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JMS: I know what you mean.

(Jah and Jade Laugh)

Jah: But I also sew, as well, so I wear a lot of hats as you can see, but again, I love destroyed items and, like, repurposing items. So, I do have a special section on the website for those items. That's, like, the first class section.

JMS: Yeah, I was going to ask you about that.

Jah: Yeah, cause those are the most expensive items, um, because they just require the most time and effort. So, I'll ultimately [take a] piece of something else, destroy it or bleach it or, you know, whatever, and take another item and, ultimately, throwing the two together, like Frankenstein-it basically.

JMS: Mm, that's, I get that. Um, and so we've talked about the manufacturing of your t-shirts and how you, how you make them. So, when it comes to distribution, I noticed earlier you mentioned that you put it in the stores like [Dynasty](#) and so on, how exactly did you form those partnerships so that they could distribute the work?

Jah: Um, what's funny about that is kind of like the same thing that I mentioned with, you know, networking. I stalked those people-

(Jade and Jah Laugh)

Jah: Literally, I would go to [Dynasty](#) and, you know, I just like to walk around and look at stuff. And “man, this is dope, bro. Like this here, like man, like, yo, y'all got some nice stuff in here,” and I'm just, like, hanging out, you know, listening and starting conversations and stuff, and, you know,



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Jah: I'll buy like, like one or two things and then I come back again and I'm just, again, just walking around, talking, striking up conversation and stuff like that. And almost just kind of like repeatedly planting a seed, and eventually we gained like, like a level of comfort that we were able to say, "yeah, like, so what do you do, bro, like?" I mean, and it's like, "Oh yeah, well, this is what I do, blah, blah, blah. On everything. Okay. Yeah. Yeah. Checking me out on IG, whatever."

JMS: Mmm.

Jah: I mean, I don't want it to feel like I was, like, trying to sell him, you know?

JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: So, I built something there. I can't say, like, what necessarily at the time. Um, but it did evolve into a business relationship...camaraderie, that's the word. It kind of built a camaraderie there, and it was just like, "Oh, okay. Yeah, Jah is cool, and, and you know, he fashionable," and, you know, whatever else they may say or whatever. And from there it was just like, okay, cool. So one day I was just out and about and I happened to post something and it caught his attention; his name is Mike, um, who owns [Dynasty](#), and, um, it caught his attention and he's just like, "Hey bro, we need to, um, speak. Can you come up to the shop? I would love to like, do something." And it was just like, "finally, like it only took me six months of lingering."

(Jade and Jah Laugh)

Jah: "Finally get it. And um, so, you know, I was like, "Oh, bro I could be there right now, you know." So, I fly over there and we sit down and we get to, you know, talking about these ideas and stuff, that's like before the actual creation process. You know, from there, it was just like, "Oh man, like I would love that. Yeah, let's do that."



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Jah: And yeah, cause I love that you did this and I love this one that you did and Oh yeah, that one and that one too. Like, I love those, like those, those is fire.”

That eventually like escalated into, “Hey, you should fly out to Vegas with us to, you know, go to the trade show and stuff.” Like, you know, it, it turned into a good enough, like, business relationship that you felt we could build further.

JMS: Hmm. And, well that makes sense. You just built these, you continue to build these relationships and they just sort of work out cause you're building horizontally. But one thing that I heard. In this, um, earlier that you said was that in 2019 momentum started to really pick up? Um, I think you said it was because, uh, you said quote “it got crazy” and I think you said it was because of marketing, but could you kind of tell us, like, what sort of marketing do you do for, for your product drops?

Jah: Pretty much, I tried like all of these things that, you know, you read about and the experts tell you to do, and it just simply wasn't working. Um, I don't know if it was because of the product or the presentation of the product, um, so what I ended up stumbling upon was Piggyback Marketing. I don't know if that's the actual terminology for it, but that's what I call it.

Basically, market off of the momentum of others, and that may sound bad or whatever it may be, but it's what worked. And that ultimately stemmed from a conversation that I had with a successful businessman, and he told me, and I quote, “copy everything.” And I looked at him weird at first and was like “ehh?” He was like, “copy everything. Replicate it. Do what they do. Do it how they do it.” And I was just like, “could you explain further?”

(Jade Laughs)

Jah: He was like, “Look at Winghouse. It's the same as Hooters. Look at Buffalo Wild Wings. It's the same asHooters.” I was like, “Oh yeah, it is. Hmm,” I was like, “oh, that's a good point.” He said “guess what? The girls dress the same.



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Jah: They wear the same sneakers with the same high socks and the same shorts and the same tank top, and they show sports and they serve beer and they serve chicken.” And I was like, “Oh, okay, well, that's interesting.”

So, I dug further into that, and again, he was successful. He had like four restaurants and all successful restaurants in, um, New Jersey and in New York. And the way I figured out how to actually utilize it was piggyback marketing, and I may be giving a secret a way that I probably don't want to give away, but whatever, I'm pretty sure I'm not the first person to have this idea.

Again, I'm a huge sneakerhead, so, I'm on Twitter, you gotta be on Twitter for a sneaker drop if you want to be in the know. So, I spent a lot of time on there trying to catch these sneakers because I also resell. I'll get a hype sneaker and, you know, you pay like 150 bucks for it, but people are willing to buy it for, like, five or six hundred dollars, because it sells out in, like, three minutes. So, I'm analyzing this huge, like sneaker culture when a Yeezy comes out or a Jordan 1 comes out, and I was just, like, blown away by it.

So, when I made my first sneaker design t-shirt, that was how I marketed. Everybody was waiting for this *Travis Scott Jordan 4* to come out and I was like, “man, it would be cool if you could have a shirt to match the shoe.” Cause nothing irritates me more, than a person who's gonna spend all this money on a shoe and then put on a pair of black jeans and a white t-shirt. I hate that so much. I'll said, “you know, what, how ‘bout I bring the shirt to you.? It is going to match the shoe completely. Every color down to the T’ll match that sneaker, so that you can get away from this black and white theme thing.”

So, I make the *Travis Scott Jordan 4*, and I piggybacked off of that marketing. So, every person that said, “you know, hey, 10 minutes until drop time,” or “the shoes dropping on Saturday.” “Hey, five more minutes until the shoe is coming out.” “Oh, this is the website is coming out on.” “Uh, make sure you got your box set up.” “Hey, make sure you got your account set up and make sure you have your PayPal set up.” Every single tweet, I would post that shirt under it, and this is thousands and thousands and thousands. I was tweeting that to every single account that posted that sneaker.

So, it basically went, “hey, I got a matching shirt for these kicks. You might not get the shoes. You could definitely get the shirt.”



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(Jade and Jah Laughs)

Jah: And I put the link and the picture under there, and I tweeted this maybe, like, a good, like, four or five hundred times, um, before the release date of that shoe. That night I had over 390 people shopping in my store simultaneously, and my sales went through the roof and I felt like I had discovered something. I was like, wow, “this is it.” I just replicated that over and over and over and over. Every shoe that I have the ability to actually come up with what I thought was actually a really good design, I would do that exact same thing every Saturday for like a year. I would do it over and over and over for every hype release of a sneaker, and, ultimately, that's where that collection ended up going. Where people want it to match their shoe. Why not make a shirt that matched it?

So it, it, it gave us such a huge boost of momentum. Ultimately, you're here for the sneaker shirt, what else are you going to buy now? So, now that's given me the ability to upsale, so now they're leaving with three shirts instead of one or they're leaving with five shirts instead of one. You're a new customer? You're getting a discount. Buy two? You're getting a discount. You know, it sails through the roof and then shot momentum through the roof, and more people started to recognize the brand.

JMS: Some, some other things that you've organized, like your photo shoots, which I saw on your IG looked to be pretty successful. So how did you go about organizing, organizing a photography shoot for you and for your merchandise, with the models?

Jah: Um, those, those actually came about....out of nowhere, to be honest. I'm not. My expectations typically don't venture into certain rooms. I'm such a, a creator, I guess you could say, that for a while. I didn't really put any attention into those other areas. Now I'm aware that they are important, but I always just kind of had this thing that all I want to do is create. Someone else can take care of the business. Someone else can take care of this and they could do whatever, I just want to be the creator. Um, I just want to make designs and make art.



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Jah: Fortunately, through all of the momentum and networking and attending all these events and shows and stuff, a lot of people just started to reach out to me. I didn't even really go find them at all. Photographers, you know, they have models that they wanted to dress. So, they would reach out. Models would just reach out, "I would love to do a shoot wearing your clothing," and that's ultimately, uh, how it came about, and once I did the first one a really good friend of mine named JAG, uh, he works at a brand called [Swig](#), they're really popular in Tampa, he just had like, like a really good appreciation for what I was doing. So, he reached out and he did that shoot for free, didn't even charge me anything, and plus he's eating really good off of [Swig](#). Like their, their brand is the biggest brand in Tampa, as far as street wear is concerned. So to work with them with an outside brand that in itself was like, "wow, bro, I can't even believe you were doing that. Like, I really appreciate it." So, we, we got our first two models. Uh, we did that shoot, and from there more photographers and more models, uh, started to reach out.

COVID has slowed that down quite a bit, just cause you can't be around everybody.

JMS: Mmm.

Jah: I actually had COVID back in July, so now I'm, like, really afraid to be around people. So, it did force me to step back and utilize a lot of those people reaching out. But as things calm down, you'll see a lot more shoots. Another talented one, his name is [Pyro](#), he also did a lot of work with [Swig](#)-

JMS: Mhmm.

Jah: And that guy is extremely talented.

(Jade Laughs)

Jah: Amazing videographer. The, like, amount of effort that he puts into it, is, it's it's, it's amazing.



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Jah: Like, he really is obsessed with detail and quality and, you know, that that is ultimately what you want in a videographer or photographer. Yes, exactly those things. You can come with a very small, basic idea, and he's going to turn that into this big, huge, amazing thing.

JMS: Well, we're coming to the end of our interview. That was, that was all quite interesting. I just looked up [Pyro](#), actually. His work does look really nice, but, um, So coming to the end of our interview, Jah, you are very obviously on your way to success. I mean, like you are selling t-shirts, you're coming up with great ideas. You're doing the marketing, you connected with people, you're building your network and a name and a brand for Tampa, so that Tampa could be known internationally and you're really doing it. So I want to know how will you know when you've made it?

Jah: How will I know when I have made it? Um, yeah, that, that, that is a difficult one. I guess when...I'll feel like I have made it when...my creation or, or just ability to create....is.....I have no idea. I'll be honest.

(Jade Laughs)

JMS: Okay.

Jah: I have no idea.

JMS: That's okay.

Jah: It's a really good question because I can't judge that off of money. And then even when you're in a hundred thousand stores, right? You can almost say that you've made it at that point as well, but there's always another level to conquer from there. So, I guess to, to, to answer the question as simply as possible, um, when I can just create and live off of that then I feel like I've made it. Me sitting here creating is everything. I can send my son to college.



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Jah: I can pay all the bills. I can, you know, venture into other territories because this is the foundation. When creation is my foundation then I have made it in that realm.

JMS: When creation is my foundation, then I'll have made it in that realm. You could put that on a t-shirt that's a slogan.

Jah: Yes! That's a really good quote. I freestyle that!

JMS: You sure did! Right off the dome.

(Jade Laughs)

Jah: Talent!

(Jah Laughs)

JMS: Well, can you tell the people where they can find where they can find you in Yampa International?

Jah: Uh, Yampainternational.com. Yampa I N T L on Instagram, on Twitter, and, I'm also on clubhouse now-

JMS: Oh!

Jah: I'm passing off the jewels that I have, and also for the sake of learning. I love learning. I love hearing from other people. I love soaking up knowledge. Um, that's where you can find Jah Stacy. Yampa International.

'On Their Way' Theme Song composed by Bajio Alvarado



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J: You have just finished listening to the first episode of On Their Way Season 2. On Their Way was created, hosted, and edited by me, Jade Madison Scott. The theme was composed by **Bajio Alvarado** and the logo was created by Amaka Korie. Fun fact: you can listen to an extra 15 minutes of this interview over on our Patreon, yeah we have a Patreon. In that interview we talk about Jah's 2019 fashion, how he determines when to discontinue items and more. Just go to on over to WGC Productions on Patreon and subscribe. You can also show us some love by following us @withgoodco on Twitter and Instagram as well as sliding over to our website, wgcreproductions.com, and purchasing some of our merch. Once again thank you for listening. I put in a lot of work, uh, the organizing and recording and editing and distribution and I'm really grateful that you guys listen. It really brightens my day, honestly brightens my month, let's be honest. Alrighty, I will catch you next week with up-and-coming filmmaker Derrick Bell Perez until then take care of yourselves and each other.