

How Dan Go Went From Brick & Mortar to an Audience of 1.2 Million

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Each week, I do a deep dive on a creator to find out how they've grown from 0 to 50k+ subscribers. I'll share the numbers, the growth levers they've used, and how well each has done.

At the end, I include some takeaways you can use to implement these strategies to build your own newsletter or audience. [Consider subscribing](#) to get these each week.

Dan Go is a fitness coach for founders and executives and has over **half a million followers on Twitter and almost the same following on Instagram.**

He's grown his email list to over 87,000 people.

And he did it after building a brick-and-mortar gym business and selling it in 2018.

How Dan Go Makes Money

Dan has a very different business model than most of the creators I've researched. But it's pretty straightforward from what I can tell.

Personal Coaching

Many creators are trying to do more courses and digital product sales and *less coaching*, but as a fitness guy, coaching is a core tenet of Dan's business.

Dan and his team members work 1-on-1 with clients to help them reach their goals.

I've seen coaching packages like this go for \$2-\$8k, but I have no insight into how much he charges or how many clients he works with. All I know is that it's definitely more of a high-ticket type of business model.

Digital Products & Courses

Dan also has a self-paced course called [Lean Body 90](#) that sells for \$397. He just launched this in April, so it's pretty new.

I bought it for research purposes and it's actually super straightforward to follow, which I appreciate a lot.

Lean Body 90

Dan's self-paced course around how entrepreneurs, founders, and solo-creators can get fit and healthy in just 3 x 30-minute workouts per week.

He includes nutrition plans, workout videos, and the exact systems he uses with personal training clients (without paying the personal training rates).

Check It Out

We earn a commission if you make a purchase, at no additional cost to you.

The Growth Timeline of Dan Go

Dan Go has been working in the fitness space for almost 20 years, but most of that time was spent helping people in person.

There is a lot of backstory that I'll explain below, but in 2020, he doubled down and started trying to grow his audience on Twitter.

The Growth Levers of Dan Go

Here are the top ways Dan has been growing his audience.

1. Don't be afraid to change your approach. Dan has tried a *lot* of ways to build an audience online, but most of them fell flat. But he didn't just give up, he tried other ways of building an audience.

2. Focus and consistency. Focus isn't just about choosing one thing to work on at a certain time. Dan is focused when it comes to his niche, but also went super hard on Twitter until it was at a point where he could add others to it. His consistency is hard to match.

3. Test your offers. Dan has tried multiple offers and lead magnets to get people into his ecosystem. But it wasn't until later that he found his groove with them.

☰ **4. Eat more mangoes.** No, this isn't a fitness tip – it's a community-building one. Dan has claimed mangoes as his "signature".

☰☰♀☰ **5. Things we can learn from fitness influencers.** Throughout my research, I found a few things we can learn from fitness folks like Dan.

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Each week I reverse engineer the growth of top creators.
You get the roadmap delivered to your inbox.

While I hope you'll share my emails, I will never share yours. Unsubscribe anytime.

1. Don't Be Afraid to Change Your Approach

When I first started researching Dan, I thought he had simply sold his brick-and-mortar gym, and moved over to coaching people online and tweeting.

But I was very wrong.

Dan has been in the online space for a long time.

I ended up finding his old blog from way back in 2010.

Dan had been on Facebook for years and was comfortable with the platform.

He was getting a good amount of clients from Facebook at the time, but Facebook **only lets you have 5,000 friends, so there was a cap on the number of people he could reach.**

Sure, there are followers, but the experience isn't exactly the same experience.

Then he tried out Instagram, but ultimately, **he wasn't seeing any traction.** Not to mention that posting pictures on the beach and writing long captions about how you can do anything you want to didn't really sit right with Dan.

He had been thinking about moving to Twitter because he liked the idea of being able to share his real thoughts and reach a large scale of people.

When the pandemic hit, he lost a few clients and wasn't signing any new ones. Plus, his first child was about to be born.

He decided that was his moment to either try his hand at Twitter or stop talking about it.

He found a mentor in Ed Latimore and used some of his knowledge to grow even faster than he would have on his own.

I'd say it was a good move.

2. Focus & Consistency

Dan implements focus and consistency into a lot of what he does. There are a few ways he does this so I'll break them into separate parts for you.

A. Niching Down

You don't have to be the best of the best to win online. But you do want to be *the* person to help your ideal audience.

Dan is not the most ripped guy on the internet (*sorry, Dan!*). And he doesn't post about his clients who have 300lb weight loss transformations.

But he's able to grow a big following because he has niched down so well and he's giving people realistic expectations.

His clients are entrepreneurs and CEOs – people who want to lose weight and be healthy enough to play with their kids when they get home. They're not trying to be the next competitive bodybuilder.

And they want to get healthy without working out for 3 hours every day or constantly thinking about meal prepping.

Dan's content reflects that really well.

Client of the day

Tony is a CEO who wanted to lose the belly & increase energy.

In 12 weeks we...

????Lost 21 lbs

????Built muscle

 *Got rid of his belly*

????Doubled his energy

He focused on strength training & having a diet flexible enough so he could travel throughout the month.

pic.twitter.com/Jb3eKbtak0

— Dan Go (@FitFounder) [May 18, 2023](#)

Take this example above – the guy looks so much healthier, but he doesn't look like The Rock. **That's on purpose.**

Dan's main thing is that you don't have to be the most ripped guy to be healthy. Sure, you want to look great, but you don't need to be the next Alex Hormozi.

His people flock to that kind of message.

B. Being Prolific

I'm not sure how I feel about this word because it seems to insinuate "good" alongside of "quantity" but it's the right word for this case.

Dan is prolific. Period.

I don't see many people writing on Twitter as much as Dan does.

In fact, I had to go find out for myself.

The only creator I could find that had more tweets than Dan was his mentor, Ed Latimore. If you don't know who Ed is, he's an "OG" and has been on Twitter since 2012.

So the fact that Dan's been able to **almost reach the number of tweets in just a few years is wild.**

Even the creator of Twitter (Jack Dorsey) doesn't have as many tweets as Dan does.

Alright, so there is proof that this guy tweets A LOT.

And the beauty of that is that he's getting so many data points back that he can see what's working.

But all of these tweets aren't just him tweeting at his audience. These include replies to other people as well, something that Dan is a big proponent of.

When you comment under other people's posts, you started to get noticed by those creators, as well as their followers, this goes for LinkedIn as well.

In the beginning, he was tweeting 100-200 times...per day.

And that's just an average, in August of 2020 he tweeted 353 times per day. That's absolutely insane.

The really wild part is that for 5 or so months, **his follower count was almost directly correlated with the number of tweets he put out.**

Do you see why I am okay with using the word prolific here? **Dan was straight-up hustling to get those followers.**

C. Focus on One Platform

You've heard me say this before, and I'll say it again: 95% of the top creators today got there by doubling down on one platform and not looking up until they crossed at least 100k followers.

And that's exactly what Dan did.

It took him around 14 months to get to the 100,000-follower mark. **And like clockwork, he started posting on Instagram right around that time.**

3. Test Your Offers

Dan had been promoting his “free video course” on Twitter as a way for people to sign up for his newsletter.

And it helped him go from 5,000 subscribers to 20,000 subscribers in 2021.

But once he started really digging in and promoting his newsletter is when the growth accelerated.

Around August 2022, his newsletter growth started taking off even more.

Let's walk through the progression of his opt-ins so you can see how they stack up.

A. High Performance 7 Free Video Course

Here is the first opt-in he used all the way up until around September 2022. On his podcast, he calls this the “High Performance 7”, but on Twitter, it's the free video course.

You can see the picture and the way he frames the opt-in. Both sound really enticing.

And then when you get to the landing page, it comes off as more of a mini-webinar of sorts that leads people to book a call with him.

I don't love this approach because the landing page doesn't promote a 4 step course, nor have that same image from the tweet on it, **so it feels like there is a big disconnect.**

However, I'm sure he got the right people into the training that he needed, I just have to imagine it wasn't a big driver of newsletter signups.

Dan promotes this throughout his podcast episodes as well. Instead of an advertising spot, he tells people to sign up for this training.

B. The High Performance Journal

In early September 2022, Dan started directly promoting his newsletter on Twitter.

I'll be explaining these in detail & how to implement them in my newsletter The High Performance Journal.

Next issue comes out Monday.

Join the 34,000+ subscribers here: <https://t.co/wtMHhpVVFo>

— Dan Go (@FitFounder) **September 3, 2022**

This makes my little creator brain so happy to see. And once he started promoting his newsletter, he started seeing a lot more growth than he was previously.

Here is the growth timeline of the newsletter by itself. Around this time, he also switched over to [ConvertKit](#) (which is what I use as well), and you can see he cleaned up his email list a few months later which is where that dip comes in.

C. Sleep Protocol Magnet

Lately, I've seen Dan promoting a new lead magnet type of offer around getting better sleep.

He's doing it really well too, because he's sharing that offer below a really relevant tweet about blue-blocking glasses (which are said to help you sleep).

You sleep for 1/3 of your life. Why not make it awesome?

*There's a protocol we give clients that had helped them
10x the quality of their sleep.*

Grab it for free below at the link

below: <https://t.co/y8JyEuUtpm>

— Dan Go (@FitFounder) [April 23, 2023](#)

He's been going back and forth between the newsletter opt-in and the sleep lead magnet when it's relevant.

I actually love this method and think it's super smart to **do both to avoid fatigue from people seeing the same thing too frequently.**

4. More Mangoes! 🥭

No, mangoes aren't a superfood or some weird fitness trend. **Dan has turned mangoes into a community-building object for him.**

He talks about mangoes in comments and replies to other people, and he also had dedicated posts around them.

How to cut a beautiful mango...

<pic.twitter.com/WzglZKpbjL>

— Dan Go (@FitFounder) [September 5, 2020](#)

Or cheeky posts like this one about how it's okay to like someone who doesn't eat mangoes.

Doing dinner soon with [@wizofecom](#) & for good reason..

He's one of the brightest 21 year olds I've ever met

*He asks great questions, self aware & is insanely talented
at online biz*

He doesn't like mangoes but don't hold that against him

Follow him for intelligence & good vibes

— Dan Go (@FitFounder) [September 20, 2020](#)

People end up tagging Dan in posts about mangoes, and some have even started eating them because he talks about them so much.

Legit I don't think I ever bought a mango before Dan

*Legit I don't think I ever bought a mango before Dan.
Maybe mango chunks but not an actual mango.*
— Jason / Chuck Roast Connoisseur (@fancypirate8)
June 22, 2022

When people who follow him think of mangoes, they think of Dan. It's his signature item.

He'll add these into jokes he makes, and even mentions them in semi-serious lists of "the 5 best ways to burn fat."

Adding his insights and pictures of mangoes helps him stand out and helps people remember him. And it kind of just makes him feel more like a human, which I think people are craving a lot more these days.

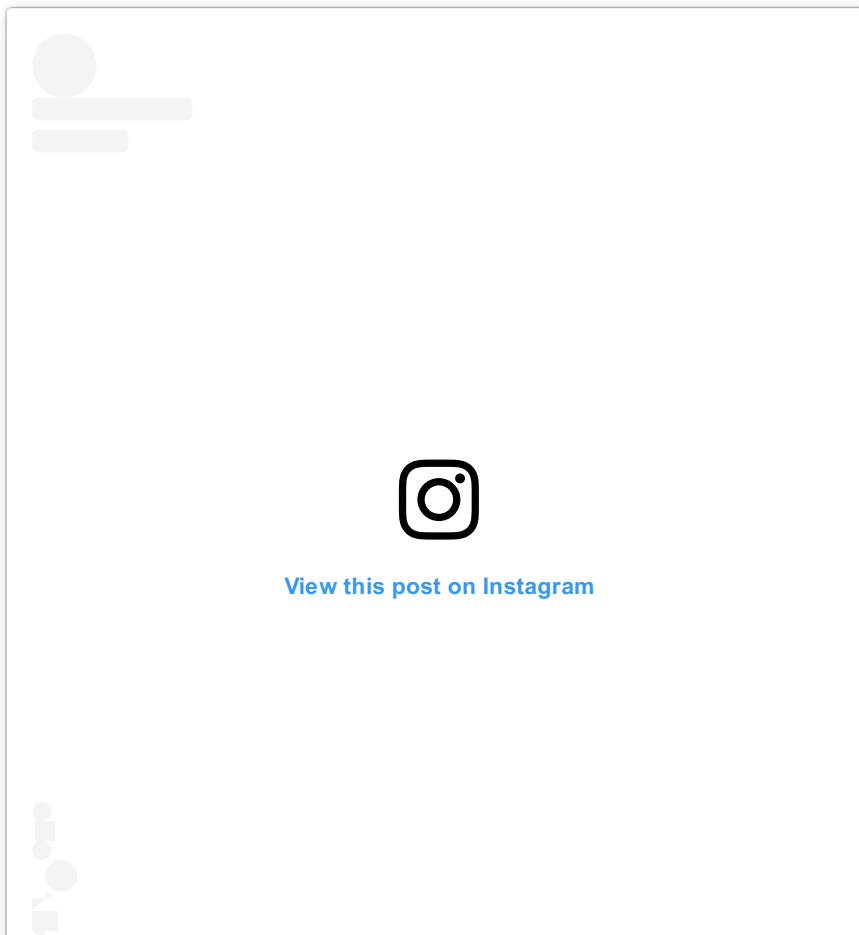
5. Things We Can Learn From Fitness Influencers

Throughout this research, I realized that there are a few things that fitness influencers do really well on social media. At points, it almost seems like an unfair advantage, but I think we can learn from them.

A. Share the Transformations

One thing you'll see so many fitness influencers doing is **sharing the before and after photos of their clients.**

While you might not have the visual proof of changing someone's body, think about how you can showcase the transformations in another way.





A post shared by Dan Go | Fitness Coach (@danfounder)

Maybe instead of posting a testimonial via text, you can get screenshots of the before and after numbers of someone who's taken your advice and seen some wins.

Written testimonials are great, but nothing compares to a simple before-and-after photo of the results you've gotten for someone.

B. Get the Benchmarks

If you've ever tried to get a testimonial from a client, you know it can be a little time intensive.

And you also know that the best testimonials are from people who knew their numbers before working with you and can share the full transformation like we mentioned above.

But you'll never get those transformation stories **if you don't have a good system for capturing your clients "before" metrics.**

For fitness, it's more straightforward – get body measurements, step on a scale, and take a few "before" pictures.

Now, this might seem like it's only for people with clients, but if you have a course or community, you should be doing this as well.

Ask questions when people sign up that are related to the outcomes you provide.

For example, I do custom audits for newsletters, so I should be asking things like:

- How many subscribers do you have?
- What's the conversion rate on your opt-in forms?
- What's your open rate?

These are things that I might make an impact on, so it can be really important to ask these questions so I can see if my work is actually helping them in a meaningful way.

That way, when I ask for a testimonial it's not just "Chenell really helped me – good stuff!" but "Chenell helped me increase my conversion rate from 2% to 10%. Now I'm getting quadruple the subscribers without needing more traffic."

Spoiler alert: I don't ask these questions yet, but I'm going to start!

C. Visualize the Concepts You're Teaching

Fitness people have a way of showing some complicated nutrition topics in a very simple way.

[source](#)

We saw this with [Dan Koe](#) and his black-and-white animations that have been going viral.

But you don't have to do this with just black and white pictures.

How You Can Replicate Dan's Successes

There's a lot that goes into Dan's success, but there are some things you can learn from him.

Don't Be Afraid to Change Your Approach

Dan has been on the internet trying to grow his business for years. While I typically don't include stories of people who started before 2017-2018, he wasn't really focused on building a digital business until around 2019 or so.

But the history of things he's tried is testament enough that you need to be okay with changing things up if something isn't working.

Whether it's the platform you're working on or the types of content you're trying, it's okay to pivot as long as you know you've given it your all.

Be Prolific

You saw those stats above. Dan brute forced his way to 100k followers by tweeting non-stop.

Not every can/will/will want to do that.

But when you're frustrated about not growing on a platform, or not getting the results you want, try and remember the commitment other people have put into getting those results.

Comment on a lot of other people's posts, especially in the beginning.

Test Different Offers

This is one of the big arguments in the creator space today: lead magnet, or no lead magnet.

We want to grow our newsletters, but if they sign up wanting a freebie, are they going to just unsubscribe soon after – or worse, just not open our emails for months?

I think it's worth a test for every audience. Some people find it works great, while others get a lot of low-quality subscribers.

But you'll never know unless you test it out on your own work.

Find Your Mangoes ????

When it comes to building an audience online, having a "signature" look, feel, or item that gets people to think of you can be really powerful.

When anyone in his audience thinks of mangoes, they now think of Dan. The benefit is that it's an everyday type of item, so he's staying top of mind with his audience.

What food, emoji, color, or signature item is going to keep you top of mind with your audience?

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- < [**How Dan Koe Exploded His Audience to 2.6 Million in Just a Few Years**](#)
- > [**Zain Kahn: Growing Superhuman to 250k Subscribers in 5 Months**](#)



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