



BUSINESS IS BOOMING

Heath and Alyssa Padgett share how they grew a business while RVing full time
By Shea Garrett

Heath and Alyssa Padgett look like your average young married couple. With two bright smiles and an urge to see the world, they wouldn't stand out in a crowd. However, one thing differentiates this twosome from others their age. Unlike your traditional home or apartment, theirs' has six wheels and a horn, and with this they travel — far and wide, all around the U.S.

This energetic millennial couple has been on the road since May 28, 2014.

Before that they were engaged; their wedding coming up in the spring. Heath was working a full-time job in software in Texas, and Alyssa was working at a non-profit in New Orleans. They had planned to take an "...extended trip for a honeymoon, and find a place that wasn't as hot as Austin to live in during the summer," recalls Heath.

The couple knew they enjoyed traveling

together, and ultimately, Alyssa brought up the idea of possibly morphing their honeymoon into a 50-state road trip. Heath said he thought it sounded awesome.

PLANNING FOR ADVENTURE

With that, the couple began to plan. They would need a way to finance the trip as it would be rather expensive. They had some savings, but not enough to fund the entire trip. They also wanted a project they could do on the road,

and eventually that led to the idea of working in each state.

"People take gap years to go out and experience the world, and make themselves a better person, and I wanted a project like that to do on the road," he recalls. "A friend of mine threw out the idea of working in every state. He said, 'You're not loving what you do right now, so it would be fun.'"

Heath says Alyssa was less enthusiastic, seeing it as a "...dumb idea, cause why would you want to work throughout your entire honeymoon? But eventually she warmed to the idea."

The couple decided buying an RV was the easiest way to set out on this adventure. With Alyssa's gluten allergy, it made sense for them to be able to cook their own meals.

"We started looking at pop-up campers, and then truck campers," Heath states. But their research led them to Class C motorhomes at the

COVER STORY



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Heath Padgett



same cost or even less than that of a truck and camper.

“We found one and bought it. We did a little renovation on it, about a month before our wedding, and then we took off a few days after it,” he recalls.

With a little more research, they found a company called Snagajob and emailed them. Snagajob helps people find hourly jobs and is one of the largest hourly job boards in the country. Heath told them about the project they were considering, and the company’s interest was piqued. The firm dispatched filming equipment to the Padgett’s, so they could document their journey across the country.

“With that, we just jumped in, and went for it,” says Heath, and that they did.

Their families had some concern about how, and if, they would be financially stable, but overall they were supportive of the couple’s decision, he recalls.

BUILDING A BUSINESS

On their journey Heath and Alyssa built their own business. Their first year on the road they did a 50-state documentary project, titled, “Hourly America.”

“I worked in all 50 states. I found an hourly job and I worked for a day,” Heath states. He would apprentice people in different jobs, interview them on camera about how they found meaning in their work, and why they went into the career they did.

The couple also volunteered to do pro bono work at conferences or events along the road, which helped improve their skills as videographers, storytellers, and in networking.

Nine months of video experience later, they got their first paid video gig. “It was like half a day for \$1,000, and we thought it was just the bee’s knees because we had never been

paid freelance to do any video before,” Heath recollects.

This gig paved a new path, and over time, they increasingly started getting paid for their skills. Heath explains “the second year on the road was spent figuring out how to build up our small, and emerging, business.”

Since then, they have been paid to shoot videos for business owners, entrepreneurs and authors. Alyssa also has published a book about their travels called *“A Beginner’s Guide to Living in an RV: Everything I Wish I Knew Before Full-time RVing Across America.”*

Heath also has done things some he never dreamed he would, like shooting video for TED.com and Winnebago, and running CampgroundBooking.com. The man, who originally suggested they “work in all 50 states,” also hired Heath to help him launch his book, plan a book tour, and do video assists around that.

A big part of what they do is document the RV lifestyle through a variety of digital outlets. “I have a podcast and a blog that reaches around 50,000 people a month,” Heath states. These efforts attract attention and Heath says other freelance work has arisen from that. He calls their podcasts and blogs their business card.

“Our marketing is in the documenting of our trip along the way,” he says. “The good part of that is when people hire us for projects, they know we travel in an RV, so it’s not a weird thing. We meet with them over Skype, and they know that we will get things done.”

OBSTACLES ON THE ROAD

With their jobs and mobile living being dependent on technology, there are other challenges. One of which is access to Wi-Fi, since their blog and podcast depends on it.

“We first bought a bootlegged Verizon plan

through a website called Rvmobileinternet.” Heath explains, but have since equipped their RV with a cell booster from weBoost, which is installed on the roof of their 2016 Winnebago Brave 31C. This tool helps them amplify their cell signal and strengthen it, as well as boost their access to faster Internet.

The RV itself presents a few challenges for the mobile worker. “RVs are not made or tailored for people who work on the road, so ergonomically speaking, I’m probably going to have back issues in a few years,” he says, noting that RV manufacturers are starting to consider these needs in their new offerings.

Heath and Alyssa are just two of many millennials who have taken up the RV lifestyle in recent years. Though challenging at times, they have learned and overcome obstacles in their journey to embrace the freedom of a nomadic lifestyle. @

Shea Garrett is a sophomore at Fort Atkinson High School, where she is a reporter for the student newspaper, The Signal, and a yearbook editor. She is hoping to get a bachelor’s degree in journalism after graduation.

More from the Padgett’s

Want to know Heath and Alyssa a bit better? Visit their website at:

<https://heathandalysa.com/>

Or listen to their podcast for RV entrepreneurs at:

<https://heathandalysa.com/rv-entrepreneur-podcast/>

Learn more about their upcoming RV Entrepreneur Summit, a conference for people who value travel, freedom and the ability to earn a living from anywhere.

<https://theventrepreneur.com/>