

S2: E145: The Ultimate Tool for Growing Your Business without Relying on Social

Hello and welcome back. I would like to welcome Rayna Rokicki today to the podcast. I'm super excited to talk all about podcast growth.

So Rayna is a podcast growth coach who helps entrepreneurs use their podcast to grow their business and generate revenue, even if you have a small audience. She's also a podcast producer and the host of two shows, Podcast Growth Club, where she shares podcasting tips and strategies, and You Betcha She Did, which highlights stories of rad Midwest women creating change. So welcome, Rayna.

I'm super excited to dive in today. Yeah, thanks so much, Tiffany. I am pumped to be here and talk about all things podcasts.

That's what I like to do. Perfect. So it feels a little meta. We're talking about podcasting on a podcast, but one thing that I really love to talk about in my audience, as you already know, is being social media optional.

And one of the ways that I've achieved that is through podcasting, because it's an alternative way to get the message out there, make my message a movement. And so I just really was excited to bring you on, because some of my audience already has podcasts, we can talk about how you can up level, and maybe they're not getting revenue yet based, you know, on the podcast, or maybe people have been thinking about starting a podcast, and they haven't taken that leap yet.

So I'd love to talk about all of those things today. And before we dive in, I just love to hear maybe a little bit about your podcasting journey. Like what prompted you to start a podcast? And why do you think it's, you know, such a great avenue to build your business?

Okay, yeah, great question to start with. I mean, I think ever since I was little, I loved audio storytelling. I love being able to listen to things and really dive into the story with my imagination.

In addition to that, in COVID, when COVID happened, prior to that, I was a teacher, middle school, high school, teaching all over the world, had a lot of fun. But COVID came and I had young kids, and I needed to find something else, because teaching online and in person with no childcare was not going to be a good fit for me or our family.

And I had a degree in communications from university years ago. And I was like, you know what, I've already done all these great audio projects with my students, I'm going to dive into the world of podcasting.

And so I first met this great woman who was a productivity coach, and she had a podcast and a YouTube channel. And she brought me on first as her VA, and kind of took me under her wing, and showed me how to do everything. And then from there, I dove deep, I took a lot of classes.

This was in 2020, when everyone was online anyway, all the time. And I really loved it. And especially, I think your listeners can probably relate, especially, there are busy people, right? And so we don't have a lot of time to sit down and watch TV.

We're always on the go, we're multitasking. And the benefit of podcasting is that people can listen to you while doing anything, while running errands, while cleaning their house, while, you know, walking their dog, whatever it might be.

It's the only medium I know, where people can be doing something else, but also really in tuned into you, because you're right in their ear. And there's, there's something really magical about that.

And you know, you were talking about social media, you know, that's the downfall of social media is that people are clicking through things so fast, right? They might find you, but maybe they spend 10 seconds looking at something, maybe a minute, right? If you're lucky, and that's it, you don't have that chance to really build up that rapport with them.

But then with podcasting, you're with that person for 20-30 minutes, you're in their head. And if they become, you know, if you become part of a weekly habit with them, they get to know you really well. And that relationship building, that trust, know, like factor is huge, because you're part of their life every week, 20 minutes, you're in their head. And it's, it's an amazing way to get to know someone without actually even knowing them.

So good. Yeah. And that's exactly, you know, why I wanted to start it.

And also, it depends, I found for me, it depends on like your personality. And some people love to show up on Instagram. And that that just isn't me, I don't want to like dance on the reels and everything.

And I am a verbal processor. So it was just made it so easy, I can sit in my office and have these conversations or, you know, put my kids to bed and late night, you know, my pajamas on and like talk, and it just feels so intimate. I love it so much.

So as you know, I'm a brand strategist, but I also do a lot of business strategy. And so one of my clients, I was having a VIP day the other day, and she's like, Okay, like, what do I do? I don't want to be on social media, whatever. And I was like, I would suggest a podcast.

And she and her reply was, you know, the market is so saturated, I'm just afraid, like to start a podcast, because everybody else is doing it.

I kind of think, well, everybody's doing everything at this point. So you know, that type of thing. But I'd love to hear your response to that. Because I think that's if people haven't started one yet. A lot of the times, that's kind of the pushback that I hear.

And I know how I would answer, but I want to hear from you, because you're the podcast expert.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, that's definitely a point and issue that comes up to people are it's so saturated, there's so many, why would I even do that?

And it's funny, because when you actually look at the statistics, podcasting is not saturated, not compared to YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, everything else.

So for example, I think at this point in time, there's about 4 million podcasts out there.

However, of those 4 million podcasts, only 10% have produced an episode in the last 30 days. So that means the other 90% those podcasts are done, they might still be out there, but maybe they stopped a year ago, two years ago, five years ago. And so the people who continue to produce content, there's only, you know, 400,000 of them, which in our gigantic world, it's not that many, it's not that saturated, you compare that to the number of YouTube channels out there.

I'm like, wow. And the cool thing about podcasting, as well as you can really niche down, I think one mistake people make is they go too broad. They're like, my podcast is for everyone.

And it's like, no, it's not. And it's business for everyone. And it's like, oh, my gosh, that's yeah, don't do that.

Yeah, like find your particular niche of people that you love working with that you really want to target. And I bet there's not a podcast for those people. And it's all about, you know, using the right keywords, so those listeners can find you.

But then once you do, you're, you're set to go. And again, you don't need a gigantic following, you don't need to be the Joe Rogans, the Glennon Doyle's, you can be a super small podcast, but have great loyal listeners. And you know, you can have 250 super loyal listeners.

And let's say 10% of those become clients. That's 25 clients for a lot of individual coaches. That's, that's a great roster.

Yeah, exactly. So kind of keep that in mind. Yeah, that's such good points.

I think we just, you know, we automatically most entrepreneurs are high achievers. And we're like, Oh, if I'm going to do it, I have to go big and go all the way need this big thing. And I'm like, same thing.

I have children, too. I'm like, No, I really don't want to do that. I don't need a studio and that like recording up every episode.

So I love that you give people that permission.

So you mentioned naming of the podcast, and I know that you said that growth, like podcast growth itself, again, because you want to grow some even if it's a smaller podcast. You know, how do you get listeners and so you say it's directly tied to your podcast name, and then SEO, which I love because, you know, like Instagram, for instance, it's just like, yes, there's algorithms, but you might just happen to be in somebody's feed.

And you might not. And I feel like there's the SEO with podcasting is so awesome. Because if people are looking for something, they can actually find you.

So I'd love for the audience to hear more about that. Because it's, I think what sets it apart from social media is, it's just not mindless scrolling, like people can actually find you.

Yeah, definitely. And it all comes down to, again, the way you're showing up.

Again, one mistake podcasters make is they, when they want to create a show, they want to have a really clever, fun name, maybe use some alliteration, or maybe it's based on this brand, right, they spent a lot of money, a lot of time making.

But in the podcasting world, obvious, very clear words are so much better than cleverness, you don't want to be clever in podcasting, because people will not find you to give you examples.

So my other podcast, You Betcha She Did, is about cool Midwest women doing neat things. And I love the name, because it's kind of very Midwest, like, did she do that? You betcha she did, you know, it's got some Midwest language in there.

However, no one's going on Apple podcasts and searching for, is there a podcast about You Betcha She Did? Like, no one is searching for that. Why would they search for that?

And for a long time, my listenership was real small, it was just people who knew me, or knew my guest, right. But it wasn't until I added a title extension onto my podcast name.

So now it's You Betcha She Did, life advice, business tips for women coaches, entrepreneurs, I added some of those keywords, then the audience started really growing.

And so when you name your podcast, if you can put it directly into the name, fantastic. Like if I look at your podcast name, I should know right away who it's for, and what problem you're solving or what it's about. If I can't tell that from the name, then you need to add a little more.

And, for example, when I was talking about the title extension, all those words after You Betcha She Did, the life advice, business tips, I never say those on the show. That's just in the podcast hosting platform.

So if someone types up, I want a podcast about business tips for women, I'm going to show up.

But I don't I don't have to say those words. You don't have to have this really long, crazy name. But you want to make sure you show up.

Speaking of growth, there's three buckets you want to focus on.

So part of podcast growth, one bucket is organic growth. So that's your SEO, your your podcast name, your cover art, and then the description for your show as well as what you name your episodes. So that's one area.

The next bucket is effort based marketing. So this is Mark, this could be social media, but more often you get more bang for your buck doing podcast guesting. So strategic guesting, getting on another show that has a similar audience, you know, maybe you swap workshops or newsletters, things like that, that really helps grow your audience.

And then lastly, the third bucket is paid marketing. So doing ads, you know, on player, podcast players are doing an ad in a newsletter, things like that help.

But those those are the three things focus on. But a lot of podcasters don't do the organic growth. And again, they can have an amazing show, but no one is finding them.

Or the number one reason they're not finding them is because of their podcast name, because they're not showing up for any search terms. So you got to make sure you have those.

Yeah, that's so huge.

Because I deal with that, you know, as a brand strategist all the time. It's like, you know, you want it clever, you wanted that. And it's like, I know, that's like the fun thing to do.

But so I'm just glad that you are saying that also. So it's not me just being like, you really shouldn't name it like late love and whatever that you're gonna know what what the heck that is. Totally, that could be your tagline, you know, right? You see in the show, but don't put it in your title.

Yeah. So good. So the other thing is, so we have SEO, the kind of three buckets.

I love that because guesting, you know, if you're on podcasts, that's such an easy way to connect with other people. So one question around that, you know, being I have this podcast, I get a lot of people emailing me, and being and pitching me basically, and most of them I have to be completely transparent, I just kind of delete or I'll ask my assistant Dana to email back and just kindly be like, No, thank you. Only because I don't have a lot of time and or they're they don't do any research.

And it's like completely off base and wouldn't even make sense for my show. So I'd love to talk a little bit about that. Like, what is the best way? Um, if I mean, for me, it's mostly been networking.

But if you have any other tips for people that are like, Oh, that's brilliant, you know, like, I want to have the podcast and maybe we you know, I could swap with people or maybe they're pitching people. Do you have some tips on how they can also get on other podcasts? And or if you are pitching, because I have had a few pitches that come through and I actually grabbed my attention. Not very often though.

So do you suggest pitching? I know this is a lot of questions and one and if so, what are some tips for that? All right, let's dive in. First of all, I fully agree with you on the pitching like if you're a will start to get pitches and 90% of the time they're not very good. They're poorly written, you can tell they don't know your show.

It's not a good match. Don't be afraid to say no. Also, I would a lot of them too. They are hiring PR firms, a lot of these possible guests in the PR firms are not doing a good job. They are just sending out you can these templates. They're so generic, and it's really bad.

So don't pay a PR firm. Step number one. Yeah, I agree, which is I hate to say that for the PR firms out there.

Maybe there's some good ones. But 100% a lot of them are not doing you not doing you a favor. And we'll just say that one of the best methods to get on another show is to first do your research on what are the shows that are really like I said, have the same audience, they're going to help you level up, I would choose an audience similar to the people you want, but maybe they're like a step higher in terms of growth, or their outreach, things like that.

And you can kind of look at their social media. You can look at some charts just to kind of see where they're at. There's no place to really see podcast numbers.

But you can look at just, you know, I think just their fan base to get an idea if it's a good fit. If it is what I would recommend is something called the podcast first guesting strategy. So first, invite them to your show.

Because podcast hosts like we were talking about, they get so many pitches, it kind of comes down to like what's in it for them. So if you're gonna invite them to your show first, share them with your audience, you start to build that rapport that relationship, and chances are, they're going to be more likely to invite you onto their show after they know you. So that's, that's one method.

Another one is networking, going to different networking events, masterminds, things like that. Because you meet people, they make introductions for you. And that helps you get in the door.

And if you don't have a podcast, and you want to do podcast guesting, you're like, well, I can't offer to have them on my podcast, I don't have one. Other options too is, you know, maybe you have a blog, you have a newsletter, I don't, you know, maybe you do LinkedIn lives, or workshops, invite them to those spaces, share them with your audience first. And then hopefully, they'll return the favor.

I know, when I do podcasting guests, guesting now, I almost always try to make sure there's some sort of collaboration. Like, if I'm coming on your show, I also want you on my show, or like, let's do a newsletter swap, or like, hey, let's do a workshop swap, so that we can really make the most of this podcast guesting experience. Because when you do it, there's there's ways to amplify it.

And it's not just you know, sharing on social media, but how can you really dive into each other's audiences and promote each other so that it's, it's mutually beneficial. So those are those are some good tips.

Wonderful. Yeah, thank you. I think we're kind of dispelling some of the myths out there. But also like the the things that people like, well, yeah, what if I don't have a podcast? Or I have one, and I'm small? How can I get on there? So that is all such great information.

So next up, you also talk about doing more solo episodes. So I think a lot of people when they start podcasting, and I started kind of half and half, I sort of did this, but now I am very selective about guests like you, I kind of make sure it's always a dual thing that it makes sense with aligned audiences. And I just have probably about once a month.

And so you know, that might vary for different people, I'd love to hear like exactly what you recommend. But I think so many people are like, Oh, I'm just gonna like interview all of these people. I even had one client who came to me and she had interviewed, like top, really top people.

I mean, she had done an incredible job with getting like, well on her podcast, but unfortunately, they were kind of so far ahead of her that she never got to be on theirs. And she did all of them favors. But it did not she was like, Oh, if I get on these, I'm gonna like, you know, blow up.

And it didn't happen. And that's all she did. That was what the podcast was about. But she was, what she was actually doing was sending everything to everybody else's audiences.

Right? So I know, let's talk about this. Because I think it's a huge thing that everybody thinks podcast is all interviews and not if you're running a business.

Right? Yeah. So Tiffany, first of all, high five. You're doing the right thing.

Once a month is my recommendation. If you're using your podcast to grow your business to grow your brand to make some money. Once a month is good, because I would say two thirds of your episodes should be solo episodes where you're the expert, you're giving advice, you're forming that relationship with your listener.

And if you're just doing interviews, no one in your audience knows you other than someone who asks great questions, but they don't really know what you're about, or they wouldn't come to you for advice, right? So you're, you're not doing yourself a favor.

If you just want to have a show that is featuring other people, and it's not tied to growing your business or your brand, then yes, do interviews. But if most of us, most people listening to this one probably are trying to grow their business in some way.

So I would say, two thirds of the episodes, you are the solo, you're giving tips or giving advice, maybe you bring a client on you do some live coaching, maybe once a month, do an interview. And just like Tiffany's doing, make it strategic, make sure it works for you.

And yeah, don't aim for those high flying people. Because again, if you're not going to be on their show, it's not, it's not going to help you at all. And also those top podcast guests, they're already famous, they're already doing well, they're not going to promote you like you'll promote your episodes, but most of the time, they will not promote your them on your episode, because they already have enough people, they don't need to, you know, do that favor.

So true. Yeah. And I feel like there's this, you know, we see people like, you know, Joe, the people you mentioned earlier, Joe Rogan, or who, whoever these top podcasters, and they do interviews. And so we're like, oh, that's what works.

But that is their business model. Like, they're getting sponsorships, they're getting, they're making money off the podcast, not their business.

So it's, it's interesting how that can get crisscrossed in our minds of like, tying those interviews to growing the business. But unless you actually want to, like your podcast is the business, then yeah, yeah, yeah, then it's not worth it. Yeah.

Perfect.

And then I think the other thing too, is, well, that's kind of the next thing that I wanted to talk about is I think a lot of people are like, I have to grow this and I have to get sponsors. And that's cool if you want to. But what you talk about, like actually, to actually make income, don't worry about the sponsors, right? Yes.

Yeah. You have to have a fairly large audience to be eligible for sponsors. So for example, industry standard right now, you'd have to have at least like 10,000 downloads a month.

And for every 1000 downloads to an episode, you would get maybe \$15 15 to \$20. So which isn't that much. So even if you've got 10,000 downloads a month, you'd be making \$150 an episode.

I think it is much more worth your time to promote your own businesses, your own services, instead of promoting other, you know, mushroom coffee or mattresses or whatever it might be, you know, better help. Like, don't do that. Spend time promoting yourself.

Because if you land, even if it's two clients a year, and let's say each client is \$2,000, you've made \$4,000 just doing your podcast, giving advice, you're building this rapport, that's so much more money than you would make. Like I said, promoting. Yeah.

So don't don't do it. It's not worth your time. Yeah.

Wow, I never realized how low those numbers actually were. Like, I you just don't know what you don't know. And so I've never really looked into sponsorship.

I although I may, at some point, even without a large audience, if it's like, maybe like an affiliate, like that, that makes something like that. Exactly. Um, that is nothing.

So it like, yeah, unless you have a massive amount of downloads. What's the point doesn't exactly doesn't make sense. And I'm going to throw this out here too.

I mean, if your podcast is hyper local, like it's very local, like my you betcha she did when I started was very local. And I just went to local businesses. And I was like, Hey, would you be interested in a sponsorship? So I would just charge \$150 a month to do an ad for them.

And that that worked, too. But again, it depends what kind of do you have a really broad audience? Do you have a hyper local one? There's different things you can do. But definitely promote your own stuff.

I feel like you make so much more money. I've got a great podcast episode. And I'll have Tiffany link it in the show notes.

But it's about how to make your first \$1,000 with your podcast in 90 days. So it's kind of setting you up for how to do that with that solar solo positioning, how to make an ask for your audience that's not salesy, and just get people to know that, hey, you're here to help.

Amazing. Love that. Yeah, we'll make sure to link that below.

And then gosh, I feel like we can keep talking about this all day. But I'll just keep it a few more questions. And that's the actually that's the next thing is how this is a question that I've heard a lot. And I'm like, well, I can tell you what I do. But I'm not the podcast.

So you know, I typically keep our episodes around 15 to 30 minutes. What is a link? Like, is there actual? Like, are there statistics around that? Or they're like, what do you recommend for?

Um, I think it really comes down to knowing your audience and their lifestyle. Like how much time does your audience have in the day? That that is key.

Okay, we know podcasts vary. There's like three hour ones, there's 15. For most entrepreneurial ones, in my experience, 20 ish minutes seems to be a sweet spot for the episodes because people are listening, maybe when they're driving their car running errands or doing something quick, they don't have these big chunks of time.

But again, it depends on your audience. If you have a podcast, one thing you can do is go into Apple Podcasts Connect.

So it's where you where the podcast is your RSS feed in Apple Podcasts. So if you go into Apple Podcasts Connect, it's the only place I know where you can actually look at the percentage of the episode that was listened to, which is really cool. A lot of the other like Spotify places, you can't see the percentage.

And so you can see, you know, in my 30 minute episode, is it listened to 80% 90%. I say if you're hitting 80 90%, that's great. If you look at your episodes, and you're like, oh, they're only listened to about 60% of the way through. That's probably telling you, you need to make them shorter.

So if you're doing 30 minutes, let's make it 20 minutes, you know, people are cutting off at a certain point. And it's time to re rethink that formula.

So yeah, and that's actually what I was gonna ask. I feel like we talked about quite a bit where it's like, okay, if you're thinking about starting a podcast or new into podcasting, so my last question, then will be, which I think that was a great one. Do you have any tips for people who maybe have had a podcast for a while? And they're like, okay, what's a strategy?

I mean, we talked about like the naming, maybe you need to rename your podcast. But any tips for people that are like, okay, this is working, but how do I like dive deeper or really amplify the podcast?

Yeah, I mean, I think one area a lot of people are missing out on is audience engagement. So building a community with your audience, like you have listeners, but how do you turn them into super fans.

And so a couple ways to do that. Anytime you get a positive written review, read it on your show right away at the beginning, give that person a shout out, because it's so fun to hear your name, right. And then when you promote that episode on social media, tag that person if you if they're like a fan of yours, right.

And then often, if you're on social media, you know, people comment on the episode, like you always post about your episode telling them what's going on.

Someone leaves a really fun comment. Again, hey, I just want to give a shout out to you know, Melanie, she said this, it was great.

If you a lot of can you people listening or entrepreneurs, coaches, speakers, get some audio testimonials from your clients. Hopefully you're already doing this. But if you aren't, let's do it. Yeah.

And then play that at the beginning of your episode too. Because again, if you're using your podcast to grow your business, it's so powerful to play and then hear a different voice that's not the coast, right, talking about how this person helped them solve this problem. And it was amazing.

And then dive into your show. Or again, you're giving advice, you're solving problems. This, this is so powerful and getting people to really feel like they're part of the community, getting people to know to trust you.

Because then they know like, hey, this there's a cool thing going on here. Like people are engaging, they're talking to one another.

And then further down the road. Think about doing a fan episode once a quarter, where maybe you invite, you know, a couple of your favorite clients, couple really great fans, you know, of the podcast, and maybe a couple close friends of yours into a zoom room, where you record an episode live.

And you you teach on a subject that you know, is a great pain point for 10 minutes. And then you have open question and answer open q&a.

People can ask you questions. And again, they're seeing you teach in action. They're seeing you do live coaching.

The people who are really excited about you get to know you on an even deeper level. They're like, well, I'm actually hanging out with Tiffany right now. This is really cool.

And it just helps build that community, which turns super fans into clients. And it's awesome. And you're doing what you love.

I love that. I wrote that one down for myself. I'm like, that sounds so fun, because I'm doing this anyways.

Yeah, exactly. Right. Beautiful.

Well, thank you, Rayna. I like again, I feel like we could just keep talking about this. Maybe we'll have to do it again at some point.

But for now, I know that you have a free three day mini course on specifically like podcast SEO, that organic discoverability. So can you tell us a little bit about that? And then we'll make sure to drop that in the show notes as well.

Sure. Yeah. So if you have a podcast, or if you want to start one, I highly recommend it's just a free three day mini course. It's all about podcast SEO.

So how to name your podcast, how to make cover art that stands out, and then also what to put in the description of your podcast. So again, you're showing up for the listeners who want you.

All you do is go to organicpodcastgrowth.com. Again, Tiffany will have it linked in the show notes, click on it.

And then each day, you'll get an email with a short video. And you can send me your stuff like you're like, Okay, I got my podcast name, I want to send it to Rayna, send it to me, I'll give you some feedback like that sounds good. This makes me wonder about this.

So, you know, I'm here to help. So don't don't be afraid to use me as a little sounding board.

Perfect. Amazing. Well, I hope this was helpful for everyone, whether you have been thinking about having a podcast, maybe you even haven't. And you're like, well, maybe I should after listening today, or you have one and you want to take it further.

Thank you again, Rayna for being on the show today. And we'll definitely have to do it again in the future.

Perfect. Thanks, Tiffany.