

Author Platform Rocket
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Speaker 1: Welcome to Author Platform Rocket, the highly acclaimed source for actionable business, marketing, and mindset strategy for authors, delivered in 20 minutes or less, most of the time. In other words, this is how you sell more books while building a bigger fan base, the right way. Here's your host and author, marketing veteran Jonny Andrews.

Jonny Andrews: What is up? I'm that Jonny guy. It's good to see you again, which I can't see you, because this is an audio-only podcast, and I was totally joking. Today, we're going to talk about something that has been requested by some folks, and I think it's going to be helpful for you, and that is how to grow your author business on a budget. This is for folks who are probably not born wealthy or in wealthy families or are already hyper-successful authors. This is for folks who there are ... There's two people who I think really need to listen to this, Jenny and Barry. I'm kidding. I don't really know any of those people. But no, you, if you are an author. I'm going to keep this nice and wide for both fiction as well as nonfiction. There's a few things. We're going to cover mindsets about what to expect, length of

time, and how to really overcome the creeping depression that is going to seep into your pores after you launch your first book and realize you're not famous yet. Trust me, this is a thing, and we're going to have to talk about it, okay? So let's kick this off right now.

Okay, so you have a book, and you have an idea of what you want to do with it. Let me stop you there. Before you hit the publish button, or even if you've hit the publish button, you can always unpublish it after you listen to this and maybe make some course corrections if needed. Maybe they're not, but let's check it out. The first thing you need to do is look at who are you writing this book for. Now, I've covered this, once again, in a lot of other shows, but I want to specifically address it, because I have been literally flooded with people who are asking all of these questions trying to hire a marketing agency before they even have their first book out. It's not your time. Slow your roll. Everything will be okay.

Here, let's start with this. Let's take a hard look at your book. Really, who wants to read this? If you want to ask who wants to read this, you need to then ask who else is writing the same kind of thing? If you're writing something totally unique and weird, well, congratulations, you might have written a book for which there is no audience or you made the next best thing. Unfortunately, one of those options has, like, a 99.999% probably and the other one's very slim. I'll let you figure out which is which. Let's say you have a book, and you're thinking about launching it, and you're like, "I kind of think I want to be a professional author." That's cool. That's great. That's awesome. The first thing to do, like I said, is figure out who you're targeting, and the way to do that is to look for those people who have already written things similar to you. Look for bigger names, because they'll have bigger audiences.

Now, let's talk about what you're going to be spending your money on and what your expectation should be. Let's actually do the expectations first. Hear me on this. If you have not done this yet, go out and get the book *Write, Publish, Repeat*. I have never in my life read a book ... I actually read this book. I know, it's shocking. I typically don't read. I'm typically an Audible kind of guy. That book right there, man, they'll tell you how it is. Seriously, don't go genre jumping. They're going to tell you that right now. Please don't do that. Horrible mistake. Gets you everywhere you're trying to go but, like, a million times slower. It is wonderful, and I'll just sort of give you the low-down to it. You're probably not going to make any traction in your publishing career until you hit book four. Book four, maybe five, maybe six. You need to be putting out in a series. Here's

what's funny. The debate on this has decreased as the truth to it has become more obvious to those who are in the market. You need to be putting out about four books a year. If you're not prepared to do that yet, that's fine, that's cool, but it's going to take a minute to get everywhere. So we're going to talk about what to focus on now.

If you're nonfiction, you have back-end products, and you have an established business or you are planning on using them for coaching or whatever it is that you're going to do, that's a completely different story. That's fine. You don't need a ton of books at that point, because you just use them as lead generation. You'll get, basically, people paying you to flow through into your lead process and selling them more stuff, and you're going to be fine. It's cool. You still need to know who it is you're targeting, and I see this all the time. Once again, I'm now getting inundated with people asking about nonfiction and personal development and entrepreneurial stuff and all sorts of different things. What do I do? Where do I go? Well, understand that your book is a gateway to bigger things: speaking, coaching, back-end products.

Now, what do we spend our money on? After we've identified, loosely, who we're going for, what should you be doing? What are the actions that are going to help you out? Well, like I said, I don't really want to be the one that rains on your parade like some mushroom cloud went out and tainted the atmosphere, but I'm going to go ahead and do it anyway. Don't expect to get rich off the book. Don't expect to make a mortgage payment off the book yet. It's going to take time to cook. You need to identify who it is, go out and get them, and then through this process ... We're going through this process right now with a client, and I'm just going to describe for you how this looks and what you can kind of expect with this. If you are well-versed in Facebook ads, I don't think you should be doing anything right now outside of Facebook. Truly, I don't. If you don't have a lot of money, maybe a \$5 a day what I call a slow cooker, and you are not going to use this ad to drive book sales. Don't try to sell your book. You're going to be giving your book away. I know, that is brutal, vile, and pig-like, but it's also the thing you need to do.

You're going to do this in exchange for their email address. So the money you spend is on two things. I highly recommend [leadpages.net](https://www.leadpages.net). Get that middle option. It's cheaper if you pay for the yearly, but if in doubt, it's like 79 bucks. It allows you to split test. I've mentioned this before. You get to flip-flop the landing pages, so you can create four different landing pages or six or 39 or whatever you want to do. Don't go above four. If you're

spending five bucks a day, it's totally going to take you forever to get enough traffic to know if those numbers are even good. This is what we're doing right now. We normally don't do this, but the fellow could. He was like, "Hey, I can pay for it." I'm like, "Great. Cool. We'll totally help you out with this, even though you're way early in your career." It's nice, because what he's doing is he's paying us to identify his audience so he can just identify the ability to write more books. I'm like, cool. If you're cool with that, I'm cool with that, as long as you know what you're getting into. He did, and he's been in business for a while, so it was fine.

What we've been doing right now is split testing these landing pages. Our first test, we weren't really sure, because it's a very obscure, very microscopic subgenre of a filler thing that takes place in ancient times and stuff like that. As you might imagine, nothing had really been done for it. There was some tests, but none of those tests really worked, because the marketing that had been done was what I call inflicted marketing rather than flow marketing. Inflicted marketing is the kind of marketing where you come up with an ad and then force that ad. You're trying to force the market to react to the ad in the way that you want them to. That stuff is typically how you see it done in corporations, like larger corporations. Typically, a form of branding or whatever it is. Unless you have a billion dollars to just hemorrhage into the ether, that's not a good way to do marketing.

What you want to do is flow marketing, which is where you just sit there and you just put options up there. You just flow with the market and let them decide. Then, you're like, "Cool. Thanks for that. I now have this information. I know who you are and what you respond to," and you push that. You keep trying to do better and better and better. It's way easier if you just say, "You people tell me what to do, rather than me trying to always, 'I'm going to come up with this great thing.'" Little aside, this is why it murders my soul when I work with authors who have cover designers that will not give them the PSDs. Those are the editable files. This is a very big point of mine. This is a personal preference, and I know that a lot of cover artists think that they're protecting their career and whatnot when they're like, "Oh, I won't give you those source files at all?" It's like, "You know what? Then get the F out. You're done. You're dead to me in every conceivable way, shape, and form." Here's why.

Any time they don't give you that ... I think I mentioned this in another show. If they're not going to give you the source files, what that means is they are literally putting their hands on the throat of your success. The

reason we won't spend a ton of money on a cover or a ton of money on graphics or a ton of money on a video is because 99.9% of them suck and fail when you apply them in a marketing setting. You're going to rip through a ton of different images before you get there, and if you have the ability to manipulate that image a little bit, maybe come up with a different version on it on the fly, that's just easier, or you could send it to someone who could do that on your team or a friend or whatever it is. That's going to help you in your marketing.

What you're doing at this stage, and I'm getting back to the original point here, is you're going to be split testing ads, you're going to be split testing audiences, and you're going to be split testing landing pages that give your book away in exchange for their name and email address. If this is where you are in your business, this is the only thing that you need to be doing from a marketing standpoint in your business. Do not get on the hustle wagon yet. Just figure out how to be an author in this space. Maybe go make some friends. It's like all these people are going to be saying, "Well, I published a book, and I haven't made any money yet. Everyone thinks I suck." It's like, well, don't have that expectation. I'm in tons of these author groups on Facebook, and I don't really go into the forums anymore, just because, I don't know, it's so troll-y. It's really weird. Forums are an odd entity. A lot of these Facebook groups, you hear these people like, "I'm ready to throw in the towel. I haven't made any money yet." I'm like, "Stop trying. Don't. Just don't try right there yet. You'll see how it is."

If you watch Stranger Things ... I'm terrible with names all the time, so it's like the two dudes are talking, and the one older guy who thinks he's dating the chick but he's not anymore, because she's off with the brother at the crazy dude's house. Oh, I'm sorry, spoiler alert. They're walking down the tracks. The dude's got his bat with his spikes on it, and he's like, "Yeah, how do you know?" He's like, "Well, you feel that electricity when you know that she likes you." That's kind of what it is as you creep up into marketing, is you start to get these results. You start to get these things. They're not massive at first, but they're tiny little blip, blip, blip, but they're good. They're awesome. They will creep forward. You're going to start by sucking. You have to start by sucking at this stuff. As you do this and you do this more, you'll learn more things. Do not spend 20 hours a week analyzing your results. I don't care if you're making a million dollars a month, you don't need that much time. We have all these spreadsheet cow people. Can't use cowboys or girls, because every conceivable gender is using spreadsheets, trying to find where are the magic numbers.

There are no magic numbers. It's going to come. If you're doing it and it's working, keep track of things, of course, but you don't need to pour over these things for 30 hours a week. Just keep a low grade data thing going. You're going to be just fine. The reason I say this is because, more than likely, you're publishing on Amazon. It will eat your soul if you sit there and try to meticulously ... It's like listening to washing machines looking for alien language sometimes, especially at this sort of zygote stage. Also, it's like, "Oh, wow, back in this time, I did these things and it worked." Great. That's awesome. What you can do, then, is you can go back and pull that data and go and look at it. It's fine. Right now, if you're just getting started, more than likely you're not very good at advertising. That's okay. It's something that takes time. It's something that's going to play out over the course of your career as an author, or until you hire us, which is awesome. That's really just what it is, is you have to chill, take a deep breath, take a step back. You're focusing on audience building.

The two things you need to do is write more books so you get your daily writing ritual and just learn the basics of advertising. Seriously. You don't need to go and hire an ad agency. Please don't. It's absolutely like trying to shoot a fly with an elephant gun. If I see a form come through like this, you'll get an email like, "Hey, awesome to meet you. Really cool stuff. I just wanted to know if you're familiar with what we charge to do this and you're prepared, because this seems like it might be a little early for you," and that sort of stuff. We're pretty open and honest about those things, because it's not good for long-term client retention if you say things like, "Oh, yeah, we can give you exact numbers." No. We don't even know who your reader is yet at this stage.

So please don't make the mistake of thinking that this is going to be this awesome thing, and I know that sucks, but that's what the industry is. That's what it is. There's no exact data point that's going to show you anything. Even AMS ads, if you're getting reads, they don't give that data yet. I'm guessing, at some point in the future, they probably will evolve to give you what it means to ... You know, where the reads are coming and stuff like that, or maybe they won't. Who knows? Facebook, you can definitely see, if you send some traffic to something and you see a little lift, that's good. Right now, jus focusing on getting people to convert.

Here's the other reason you want to do that. After, say, like six months or something ... If you're rocking out at, like, five bucks a day, that's cool. You don't need to go much crazier than that unless, like I said, you have a back-end product that's already established and you're charging several

thousand or several hundred dollars for it, and you can afford to spend more to drive more traffic to that because you're making money. That's awesome. That's why I like working with those folks, because it's a different game entirely. You point at the book, but you set the conversion for the back-end product. Then, you just hold open the fire hose and wait for the humans to go while you track the click-through from the books to the product and whatnot. That's a great feeling. If you're in fiction, it's a completely different story, because your margins are basically nonexistent.

Now, the other thing is, and I've seen this a few times, is don't go charging 10 bucks for your book. If you're not, say, like Stephen King or Margaret Atwood, it's probably not going to fly off the shelves. If you're new and nobody knows who you are and you don't have a ton of reviews, then price it accordingly. Just be easy to access. The point of this, and this is really funny, because the point about, well, this is art, and I should be able to charge for my art, well, you do and you can. The beauty of your art is there is no physical substance to it, and you can sell it as many times as you want to as many people as you want. If you're charging, you can make as much money as you want with it. You can get paid as an artist, but get paid realistically. No one's going to buy ... This is not a pewter Siamese cat ashtray that has the Shroud of Turin stitched into it. It's an ebook. I say that with a smile on my face that you can probably hear. Like I've said in different episodes, I've had that conversation with authors before. I've reached out and said, "What's up?" These are the crazy things that tend to come back.

So this is what you spend your money on as an author. This is the mindset you should have when you're first getting started. You need some sort of split testing landing pages, and you need leadpages.net. Get that middle option that they have, unless they've changed it up. Probably because they heard my podcast. They're like, "Oh, we'll make it the fourth option now and throw them off." I think it's the middle option that allows for split testing. Super important. Super important. And some Facebook ads that are optimized for leads. Don't get leads through Facebook, because those will always be too expensive. It's weird, though. Seriously. One of the tests that we're working on with the dude that I was maintaining right now is we went from \$10 a lead ... Literally, it was costing 10 bucks per subscriber. It was crazy. Obviously, that sucked, so we shut that down, shut the ads down, because he had come to us with literally no working audience.

We're like, "Well, let's tweak this out a little bit more." It's like, "What did we do over here? Okay, we want all authors. You know what? Let's overlay, overlay, overlay." I came up with this multi-pronged overlay thing in the ads, where we have authors, where we have the end theme of everything, and then also, did you know this, you can get people who own certain devices, so I said people who own Kindles and things like that and went a little bit more into there, so we threw that thing on. We went from \$10 to subscriber, where we have one page converting right now that ... Here's what's so cool. This is why you split test. We went from 9% conversions on the landing page. Today, we broke 40%, and this is just on the test. We went through multiple sets of ads into multiple pages, but this is what we call audience discovery. This is what this looks like when you have no idea. When someone comes to you with absolutely no concept of who they're actually targeting and wants to do it, that's what you do, is you go poking into the darkness. You make modifications based on what you see the end result being.

I'm not looking at what the cost per click is. That is not the metric to look at here. The metric to look at is your cost per lead, your cost per subscriber. So that's what you do as a new author. Check your mindset, get ready for the long haul, figure out who your audience is, and spend time growing that while you spend time learning how to write books faster. If you're serious about this, this is how you win the game. Go get that book, Write, Publish, Repeat. I have no affiliation with it whatsoever, other than those dudes are spot on when it comes to the writing part of this. Then, you listen to me for the rest of it. You'll probably make it out alive. All right, there you go. That's all for this show. I'm sure you're feeling extremely excited. Go get them, tiger. This is going to be easy. I'm totally kidding. It's a slog. Welcome to being an author. See you in the next one.

All right, that does it for another round of authorplatformrocket.com. Remember, we're here to help you with your business, marketing, and mindset. If you have a question, want us to cover a topic, or interview a special guest, just shoot over an email to show@authorplatformrocket.com. As always, we need your reviews and support. If you like what you're hearing, please leave us a glowing review on iTunes and forward this show to an author friend who might need the love and assistance. Most importantly, if you're an author who needs help with marketing, why not let us do it for you? Check us out at authorplatformrocket.com. Always affordable, effective, done-for-you author marketing so you can get back to writing your books. I'm Jonny Andrews, and that's it for today. I'll see you on the next show.

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