

Author Platform Rocket
-Podcast Transcription-



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- Voiceover: 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, Johnny Andrews.
- Johnny Andrews: Welcome, folks, to Author Platform Rocket. I am Johnny Andrews. Today, we're going to talk about something that is, once again, very near and dear to my heart as well as the hearts of the vast majority of authors that I've worked with. What it is, it's a killer. It literally is. It is absolutely the most murderous thing that could possibly happen. At the same time, you kind of have to flirt with it a little bit. You do. You do in certain ways because there are times when ... You know, let me say it this way. The market has changed. Back when I first got started in the actual book publishing thing, not just self-publishing courses and books and my own thing, but before Kindle was even invented, but in the early times in 2008 when I'm like, "Hey, let's try this thing out and see what's going on." Amazon was a different place. The book market was a completely different place. The world was sort of like, "Oo, a digital book." They didn't really care if it was awesome. Now, everything's changed. The reality is you have to put out a good book. Now, if you're fiction or nonfiction, it

doesn't matter. It's the same conversation on both of these levels. You could totally hang out and listen, and I think it will be important.

Today, what we're going to talk about is the problem of perfection. Yes, people, perfection, because perfectionism is an absolute murderous vixen. Oh, she is horrible. She is evil, absolutely. Maybe it's a he. I don't know, but for this talk, we're just going to talk about perfection as being a big freaking problem that you actually have to flirt with. All right? Here we go. Let's put this into context, shall we? Every week, and I say this all time because we really do get what you would call an epic crap ton of email from authors and entrepreneurs and all sort of folks now that we've kind of moved into the working with all these nonfiction folk and stuff. A lot of people are like, "Hey, I'm in the process of ..." Often times we'll ask them, "How long have you been at this?" If the answer is a year, you've done it too long. I know that there is a belief that a good book takes a lot of time to create. However long you take is kind of up to you. You've heard me say this before that if you're not putting out four books a year, you're really probably not going to make it in this industry.

I know there's a lot of mental people get jammed up on that because of the belief that this is somehow something that takes a long time to get good stuff out. That's simply not true. I'm not going to really go more into it than that, but if what I'm saying bothers you or if you need more information on it, the best book to read on the subject literally is Write. Publish. Repeat. It's by Sean Platt, David Wright, and Johnny Truant. Those three guys are friends of mine. They're awesome. I could not recommend this book more. I literally couldn't. I think it is the best on the subject of putting out content for this day and age, like creating books and how to do it. Their explanation for how writing faster actually makes you a better author is untouchable. It's true too.

I mean, if you look at their evolution of process and you look at the evolution that they have gone through. If you are not familiar with who they are, you need to learn about these people. They have the Self Publishing Podcast. I think that's theirs or Smarter Artist or something like that. It's hilarious. There's so many podcasts out there now. I really can not keep them all straight, but I do know that they are Smarter Artist, and you should check that stuff out because I've been to their event. Well, I went to their first event and it was absolutely wonderful. It was a very tight knit group of people. Their whole philosophy behind what I'm talking about I think is just epic.

Now, let's get back on point here. That is the problem of perfection. See, when I got started, I put out that book, How to Finally Live Debt-Free and Wealthy, which I have since unpublished because it was a raucous piece of unedited crap, not in terms of the content that it had, but just in the writing. I didn't have an editor and I really needed one. You could kind of get away with that back in the day. That was like 2011. The world was

undergoing massive changes. You could have that sort of stuff. Now Amazon has an algorithm that actually sniffs out problems with people's books. I've seen things before like something called a Cambridge comma. What is that? I don't know. I don't care. I've seen conversations in author forums about how somebody got flagged by Amazon because they were misusing a comma. I mean, really?

Here's the thing about perfection. It's neither possible nor required. It isn't. What's funny is ... Traditionally published folk, in fact, that entire end of the industry, as they sort of fade into the darkness and obscurity, have this constant scream about how they are the benchmark of everything that's awesome. The reality is you find traditionally published books that are loaded with errors. Maybe not loaded loaded, but definitely loaded, like definitely has some. What was her, whoever did Harry Potter, can't remember for the life of me. She put out a book that very not Harry Potter-ish and, when they uploaded that thing, it just went completely like (squawk). It was awful. It looked like the dog in The Fly, that first movie with Jeff Goldblum where they try to transport it from one machine to the other and, you know, when they opened up the door, the thing was like inside out. It tried to bark and exploded. That was pretty much what her book looked like. Don't worry about it too much.

Yes, you do have to flirt a little bit with perfection. Here is the rub. There is a fine line here. If you're focused on perfection rather than output, because right now it's the speed of implementation, this world, money follows speed. Money does not follow perfection. What you will find is, and I have found this over and over and over and over again, the audience doesn't care. In fact, virtually none of them are going to notice. In our agency program, we've misspelled things before in an ad that we're running for like a month. People were like, "How could you even admit that?" Because no one cares because it was profitable. It was a profitable ad that had a typo in it. It's like who cares? Are you making money? Great. Now shush it. Go, go, go. It's working. In fact, it might have been working even because of that, not in spite of that. The world doesn't care about your attaining perfection. The world cares about you putting out more stuff so that they can consume it. That is what you have to realize about your fan base. Unless you have a fan base that is comprised completely of, I don't know, junior high English teachers or something like that that are completely down with the grammar, then okay, maybe, but, for the most part, it doesn't matter. Nobody cares. Virtually nobody is going to notice. Focus on getting stuff out.

Now, this is not just about your books. This is also about your marketing. This is a big one. If you're thinking about putting out courses, I want to tell you about something because I'm about to launch Perfect Publishing System 4.0. It has been since, I want to say, maybe 2013 or 2012. I don't even know. It has been forever since I put that thing out. When I first rolled it out back in 2011, it was December of 2011 I want to say, and this

is before I had the publishing company or anything. I was just doing this stuff on my own. I hadn't really told anybody what I was doing. Before that, I had been following all of these courses that were coming out of the Warrior Forum on how to make money with Kindle by repurposing garbage stuff like private label things and repurposing this and just publishing it into Kindle. Like I said, during that window of time from 2008 to about 2011, Amazon was fine with that because what it did was it inflated their numbers. They can say, "We have 36 million books on our platform. It's amazing." It didn't matter that half of those were the same cat food cookbook that had been retitled like 86 times by marketing people. Obviously went through unpublished all that stuff, made sure to clean everything up.

That's when I put out the *How to Finally Live Debt-Free and Wealthy* book. Even though that book itself was really raw from an editing standpoint, the message in it was what people needed to hear. It was the story of how I went from being completely wiped out when I was homeless, living out of the back of my car in this office, trying to make money in real estate, and how I got hit with identity theft and completely decimated within two weeks of achieving my financial goal that would have set me up probably, maybe not for life, but at least for several years with some very passive real estate cashflow. It was like someone dropped an A bomb on my life. I completely wiped out. My credit went from like a 700-something down to like a four. I was in the complete toilet. Everything went into total delinquency. Lost all my earnest money. I had to overdraw my bank account by \$200 to go get enough gas to drive from Saint Charles, Illinois to Asheville, North Carolina where my parents had just retired.

It was crazy. I literally coasted in on fumes. I was about to be late on my car payment. My credit was in the toilet. I couldn't get a job because of all the stuff that I did at the time. They checked credit. They were like, "If your credit's this much of a mess, you can't work with clients. You're clearly just a complete hot mess." I couldn't really fault them. Then, you know, I got dropped by my car insurance because, "We show a correlation to people who can't pay their bills on time to auto accidents." I'm like, oh, yeah. I have a perfect driving record but somehow the fact that I had identity theft means that I'm no longer going to drive well. That's sound advice. Good job. Yeah, I don't like him. Anyway, I digress. That was what the story was. It was, you know, what happened, the hail of the triumphant return of the entrepreneur coming in on a burning wreckage, barely making it, coasting in to their driveway in this 2001 Honda Civic with all of my belongings in the backseat because I'd been almost for a year at that point living out of the back of the car in this tiny little office, and what their reaction was to that, what that was like to experience my parents who never agreed with what I was doing in the first place, let alone understood it.

I come from a family of six. I was actually adopted into a family that now has six PhDs. I am absolutely not an academic. I am the last person on earth who has the temperamental disposition to follow in their footsteps, but it was very interesting experience because their rejection of who I was sort of on a visceral level. I've always had that entrepreneurial gene, but I was raised to believe that it was evil and wrong. I'll never forget the day when I was sitting there right after, it sometime right between college and high school, I was trying to get a job and just nobody wanted to hire me. Why, I wonder? I had gotten really good at getting the interview. I was like, "What if I put a little website and help people with their resume and get their foot in the door for an interview?" I'm like, "I'm really actually kind of good at that. I can't close the deal, clearly." It was crazy. I'll never forget. My dad looked at me and he was like, "You can't do that. That's fraud." I had no idea what he was talking about. It's like helping people do a thing that I'm good is not fraud. It's actually exactly what you should be doing and charging a little bit of money for it. It was very interesting situation.

Anyways, I never really talked about that in the podcast before, but that is the story behind the How to Finally Live Debt-Free and Wealthy. Then I talked about how over the next couple of years, I slowly, slowly, slowly clawed my way up and tried to ... It's just like in The Martian at the very end when Matt Damon has come back from Mars. He's teaching the class. Like, "How did you do it?" His answer, I'm paraphrasing obviously, is like, "Well, you know, you get there and you're presented with one problem and another and you solve one problem and you solve another problem. Eventually, you get to go home." That's how it is. You can't worry about perfection. You literally can't. I put out that book. It was raw. It was just crazy. People loved it. They really did. Obviously, it should have had an editor, but that's okay. It was good enough that everyone was super excited about it.

Same thing with Perfect Publishing System, that book, that training course I put out. You could literally hear me sipping coffee in the videos. I'm like, "All right. Hang on. Let's take a sip." I went through the entire process behind how I turned that thing into a massive bestseller that blew away all of the big names in personal finance. I just broke down my process. I showed them all the techniques I used. I think, I want to say that course, when I put it on a forum, didn't even use a sales page for the thing, I just posted it on a forum. It went insane. It sold over \$450,000 worth of copies in, I want to say, maybe six weeks. It was fantastic and it was a super cheap little program at the time. Then, after that, I repurposed it. I made it bigger, put more stuff into it, really just channeled everything that I had learned on top of that. Now, I've completely overhauled it again. It's about to come out. None of it was ever perfect. There was a process behind it. It was like get something out, just get something out. It's the speed of implementation that matters.

Because of that course, because of what I did with the book that was really raw, I just went with it, because I just went with that course, it put my name out there. It literally went a long way in transforming the entrepreneurial side of this entire industry because it was back in the day where nobody had any clue how to actually do all of this publishing stuff. It was the first course of its kind that showed that you could make a real living using a good book directed at the correct market. Nobody at that point in time had ever said anything like that. It was always, "Go, go, go," but it wasn't perfect but it did what it needed to do. It influenced people positively and it made a ton of money and it put me on the map. Since then, I've been able to get the kind of level of street cred that you wouldn't normally see just if it hadn't come out. I was able to show up on ...

Pat Flynn actually reached out to me. He's like, hey, you know, it was in 2012 I want to say. The following year, he's like, "Well, I was looking for a publishing expert and I wanted to interview you and see. I asked around and your name was the number one name that kept coming up as to how to publish on these things." Obviously, this is before most of the publishing gurus had come out. That's my message to you. Don't worry about perfection. Yes, get it good enough. Yes, take enough time. What you want to do and this is where the power of deadlines comes in, because when I first put out Perfect Publishing System, I did the entire course in 18 hours from inception to execution, to where the first sale had been made. I remember my wife just would, every couple of hours, come up with a cup of coffee and a sandwich, didn't say a word. She knew exactly what was going on. I was just jamming on this thing, making videos, just making videos, just making videos, just documenting, documenting, documenting, creating, uploading, and going. It worked like a champ.

I want you to think about that. How hamstrung are you in your business? Whether or not you're just doing books, whether or not you're just doing courses or products or whatever you're publishing, where are you hamstrung with this concept of perfection? Are you worried about stumbling over your words? Are you worried about maybe you didn't perfectly communicate the message? That's the beauty of this. Let it go because it's going to resonate with somebody. Right now, I'm studying. I'm doing some deep dives in some extremely high level masterclasses on Facebook Live and chat bots and all these different kinds of things. What I'm seeing above all else is that perfect execution is completely pointless. Not only that, it's impossible.

I've watched a lot of folks in the author community who put out courses where there's these super high gloss, really refined videos where they overlay the audio on top of it. I'm going to tell you something. It doesn't work as well as just having authentic, raw communication with the person. When you think about it, just have that one on one conversation

in your videos. If you're to do this, if you're to do the Facebook Live thing, just execute. Come up with that content strategy where you're going to drip feed pieces of these things to get people from where they are to where you want them to be. Come up with that story even if you don't tell it right the first time. Learn from that. Cycle back around. That's what I did with the course.

Executed the first time, people loved it. I said, "Okay, where are the gaps? Boom. Let's remake it." Circle back around. This time, I did it with cool slides and a cool little intro. I may or may not do the cool intro this time. It doesn't matter. People don't really need to have that in order to be able to get the value out of the experience. The value, if you're fiction, could be the story, to fall in love with the characters. If there's a comma missing, don't worry about it. You'll be fine. Amazon can tell you that and you can go fix it. It's not a big deal. Just get it into the world. Get that first draft out. That's what I'm doing right now. I literally just spoke two books into being in two days. With the editor right now, he got me back my first one. I'm like, "All right. Let's do this." Now we're going to work on fleshing this thing out to the point where it's going to be a usable, highly valuable piece of content that can be published on all platforms that can really help people.

That's what I would challenge you is push the perfection concept but don't go too far with it. Get it good enough that it's going to make people happy. I know that a lot of folks hear that as almost like a cop out like, "Eh, just kind of half ass it." I'm not telling you to half ass it. I'm telling you don't try to get perfect because if you try to get perfect, the amount of time that it's going to take you to get anywhere in this business is going to be ridiculous and it's just going to kill you because the speed of implementation so far outweighs the need for perfectionism on every level. It's going to matter to you emotionally because you're going to be able to see things come into this world that you created and that's going to positively impact you when you see people reacting to your stuff.

What you're going to see is you're going to be like, "Oh, I could have said that a little bit better." Well, you probably could have, but who cares? Just put it out. Just get it out there. Just do it. Just get that stuff out there because you're going to be positively influenced. Same thing. If you're putting out a book. Hurl it out there. Get it into the world. Make a couple of sales. That's going to give you that emotional positive reinforcement to keep going and keep doing more of it. If you sit there and you kind of hunker down and you're like tinker, tinker, tinker, tinker, it's never going to work. You're never going to experience that. It's going to dramatically negatively impact you. The people out there that you're trying to help or you're trying to entertain, they're never going to know who you are.

Get it as close as you can and that's what I was saying earlier. Maybe hook it up on deadlines. Maybe look for a deadline. Say, "I'm going to give this seven days or I'm going to give this five days." What I did was I said, "Can I

create two books in two days?" The answer is yes, I can and I did. It's awesome. Maybe I'll circle back around to doing four books in four days. Who knows? I might be able to do that. Like I said, don't worry about perfection especially if you're in the first draft. Before I sign off, I'm really going to drum this one point home. If you're trying to get that first draft out, this is where that internal editor thing is really just going to be murderous. Everybody has it. I have it. That's why I've working on this system of mine for getting these books out quickly because nobody can overcome that inner voice that tells you like, "That's not good enough. You can rewrite it." You can outrun them. That's why it comes down to a matter of speed.

Everything should be done under a deadline, on a time clock, because doing that right there, it will wipe out writer's block. It's incredible. Even if you produce garbage, because not every day is perfect, but even if you produce some levels of garbage, you can fix it in a mix. If you're working on that first draft, the concept, throw it out the window and just run. If you're doing something else, maybe sleep on it for a day, get back, make your edits, and then execute. If you're doing live content, don't worry about it. It's live content. You're probably not some CNN newscaster who's been doing this for a bunch of years. Don't worry about it. People like it when you're like, "I don't really know. Oh, technical difficulty." People like that. They see it as human. Don't let this whole perfection thing get you down. It's speed of implementation and consistency of implementation that are going to get you from where you are to where you want to be. It's going to happen a lot faster if you can outrun that inner critic right now.

Thank you so much. Have any questions or you want me to talk about stuff, remember show@authorplatformrocket.com. All right. I'll see you next week. 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 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 the show to an author friend who might need 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 Johnny Andrews and that's it for today. I'll see you on the next show.

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