

**Author Platform Rocket
-Podcast Transcription-**



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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. And here's your host and author, marketing veteran Jonny Andrews.

Jonny: What's up, party people? It's that Jonny Andrews fellow. Welcome to the Author Platform Rocket podcast. And today we are going to talk about an issue that is shaking the foundations of the author community - the GDPR, yes.

I've had so many authors blowing me up, one in particular that I really like that I'm going to kind of cite a lot of the information that she sent me about this, because the General Data Protection Regulation for the European Union, that is what we are talking about, just to break down the acronym, of which I am so fond of acronyms, as you already know. And it's caused quite a stir out there in the author communities. And, you know, rightfully so, because it's an acronym, and those things are terrifying. I mean just saying that, GDPR. Whoa! My word! I am shaking in my booties.

So, here was ... lemme give you kind of the breakdown on all this kind of thing. So, my furious friend here writes me, this is what Maylor Light wrote me. First of all, goal of GDPR is to have proof of your EU subscribers have given you consent on your list, which

is great and she initially had received, and I'm scrolling back up here cause I'm actually reading this almost in real time and what it initially sounded like to her was that Maylor Light was requiring her to re opt in her entire list.

Now there's a few things that I want you to keep in mind about this and, in fact, I'm gonna give you some data really quickly here. I'm going to look at ... and this is sales data keep in mind and this is from book report and we're running, we're probably half way through roughly this cool little box set that we're doing. Some of it went well, some of it didn't, but overall you know we've done a lot for sales and reads and that kind of thing and over a million, over two million pages read which is super, super cool at this point and time, which I love. Oh, I'm sorry. No, I'm lying. It's 1.3, so we're creeping up on that, but I'm looking at our earnings by marketplace and when you see earnings by marketplace you can draw a similar correlation to audience because your audience is gonna be based in where you're selling. And so, as you might imagine, United States accounts for 81.6% of our activity, followed closely by Amazon.co.UK, which is 13.4%.

Now remember Brexit, that happened recently, that means that the UK is no longer part of the European Union and therefore not part of this. Now obviously I'm not a lawyer. I'm not a political analyst. I don't ... but I play one on TV of course, but if you really want to make sure I'm like 99.9% sure this does not affect the UK. I'm looking at 2.5% Canada, 1.7% from Australia. Now we get into the brass tax of it, alright. Are you ready for this number? .4% from Germany and .4% from other. Now that's the cumulative across the entire account. I just wanted to look at that and so basically, we are at .8%.

Now if we assume that the .4% other is all European Union stuff, that's fine. Let's just play worst case scenario, so that means we are less than 1% of our buying and reading audience is coming from the European Union, so I wanted to put that little piece in perspective. Now if you are actively marketing to the European Union, your numbers are going to be different. In fact, your numbers are probably gonna be different regardless of what you're doing anyway anytime because everyone's numbers are always different, but let's look at kind of the sort of overall. What is this thing really? What is the GDPR?

Well what it is is the European Union decided that they want to take ... better protect their customers data and so, if you have them subscribe to any list, people that come from the EU, then you have to make sure that they know they're there and that kind of thing, so that caused a bit of a stir. In fact I've been a lot of times by a lot of authors, well what about this, what about that, what are you doing about this and that ... Here's my answer. I'm not doing anything about it. Seriously. Here's why. First of all, the message that Maylor Light sent out was not framed correctly and by framing I mean, they didn't explain this right. Here's the thing, you do not need to send your entire mailing list something about the European Union and get your entire list re opt in. Are you kidding me? Come on now. If you're like most authors, then you're probably gonna have, at least 80% of your list is going to be America, 'Merica, so you don't need to send American subscribers something for the European Union, so this whole, I'm gonna lose 80% of my listing is BS to begin with. Don't even go there.

Seriously, it's like, in fact, let me ... Hear a little tidbit for you in life in general. If you're freaked out about something ... don't go ask other people that are equally or more so freaked out about the same thing you are for advice. Please. Instead, go to the source. Like for example, these ... you know this is all about data collection and that kind of things and disclosure. That's it and it's happened before. This is why I have like, my pulse didn't even rise a little bit when I heard about this because the European Union first of all represents less than 1% of my audience across all of my ecosystems. Am I going to send them the message and make sure that they know that they subscribed? Actually, I don't know. In fact, I don't know if I have to because when we went back to Maylor Light and I told her this is, I'm like, you don't have to worry about this for people that aren't in the EU and I know that Maylor Light maybe didn't explain that correctly, but when she reached out to them, sure enough it turned out that it was accurate, that my feelings on this were correct.

And so, I'll give you a quick rundown about ... This is what Maylor Light wrote me. First of all, the goal of the GDPR is to have a proof that your EU subscribers have given you consent to be on your list. Right? I think that's fine. If you already have such proof, aka they signed up through your form, it doesn't even have to be double opt in, you don't need to send the GDPR email. If you don't have such proof, then you will need to send it. You can keep resending it for those who did not open. What's funny about that is you just got permission from Maylor Light to spam the ever-loving crap out of your European subscribers because you can just keep sending them, "Hey guys, you're on my list", kind of thing. And so, if they click yes, then they'll be automatically created and they'll be in that new group that is, that gave you their consent, so what is consent?

Consent is subscribing of their own free will to a list and in the words of Maylor Light, they don't even need to be double opt in, so it could be a single opt in that they put their email address in there. If they're opening your emails and reading your stuff, that's, and they know that they subscribe, you're completely fine, so this is like such ... This is literally a nonissue at all. In fact, what I'd like to do is take a little step back.

I wanna take ... Remember I'm a grandfather, in this, I've been doing this since 2004, and poorly I might add, way back in the day that's when I was cutting my teeth. But I've seen some things. And I want to talk about some things, like even PayPal had no idea what this online selling thing was, you know? So, collectively, over the course of many years I had their risk department cracked out on me, I'm not the only one. You've probably heard horror stories, they held ... like I said there's over a couple times, but over \$900,000 of my sales for six months while they were deciding if this was a risk or not. In fact the first time they did it, they locked it down so hard they wouldn't even let me issue refunds from the money that they were holding. Think about how stupid that is.

They since changed their policy and what happened many years later is they got, they actually lost hard core a mega whippet class action lawsuit because of those Draconian business practices. And wouldn't you know it, they're way easier to deal with now and far more open. It's great, I actually love using Paypal, now, I didn't back in the day.

Then also, I think it was circa 2009 2010, we had the FTC, the Federal Trade Commission crack down on truth in advertising. What you can and can't say in your marketing. There was a huge uproar about this, it was like, "Ah, the sky is falling. Everyone's going to die." No, the sky is never falling, it just feels that way for a minute until you figure it out. Which is ... and after you see these patterns emerging over and over and over and over and over again you kinda get to the point where you're like okay cool. This will shake some ...

Literally, look at it this way, if people are freaked out about this GDPR thing, that's great, if they're thinking this is ... They can't do things in their business, that's awesome, because that means they're going to be flushed out the door. That leaves more room for us. That's awesome, it thins the herd of the people that probably weren't doing a good job in the first place, were kinda like sucking the oxygen out of the room. It's awesome, it's fine, let them go, if they're terrified of this and refuse to move in their business because they have no idea what it actually means and they want to err on the side of caution, okay fine. If the one percent of your list that might be potentially affected, which is probably not affected simply because if they subscribe of their own free will that means they're already there.

But, ultimately here's what this leaves you with, let's say you do send out this email and your 50% of your list is from the EU and you send this out to that 50%. And they're there because you uploaded a spreadsheet and they didn't know it because this is kind of what this is getting into. If they don't know they're there and they've been reading your emails like, "Well I don't know how I got on this list. But my word this is entertaining." In whatever language they're speaking at that time and you say to them, "Hey, I'd really like you to be here but I also want you to know that you're here. So click this link and you can stay here, and if you don't click this link you're not gonna be here." That's what you get after those people have clicked your link.

You get people that actually want to be there, I mean you get these highly responsive people that have now taken a second action. So this is actually a good thing from a marketing perspective because so many people talk about lists, "Well, I hit send and I'm not making the money that I want to make." Well then clean it off! Get rid of the people who don't buy things, get rid of the people who aren't engaged. Here's an opportunity to do that. In fact, why not take that opportunity with everything.

And so to get back to the historical stuff, we've had Google Slaps, you've probably heard about those if you've been around, they were all named after wild animals. Panda, Dodo bird, the Osprey, the Pinwheeling Eyeballs of Perpetual Death, okay well that one ... I think Panda was correct. But they named these things and they would change their algorithm ... and wipe out all of these search engine rankings.

And all it is to improve the quality of the situation. Now, there's this big thing, where they're not even going to rank you, they're not even ranking your desktop version of your site. They're ranking the mobile version of it. So if you're not mobile optimized, and mobile optimized correctly. Furthermore, if you don't have an SSL, meaning if you're not ... if you don't have a secure website, then you're probably going to be pushed out of the rankings and things like that.

So this is just European Union thinking it's one thing in a long line of things and more things that are still coming. Alright, so let's really look very closely at this because here, now, let's get to the bottom line coming doom and gloom sort of thing.

What this is is a very small step in a direction that we're starting to see in the marketing world. Not just for authors but everywhere. Of permission only based marketing. Meaning, the world is very quickly moving to this thing if the people don't give you permission to market to them you're not even going to be able to reach them. And so you need to start planning for this. You see where I'm going with that? This is one of those very important things where people and their permission and what they want to see. It's the consumers that have all the power, not the marketers, not the authors, not the people running the ads. It's permission based and it's going to become more and more and more and more and more like that.

So these things like Facebook Groups, or Snapchat, or whatever it is you're doing out there. Those things ... you know if someone follows you or subscribes to you that's going to become the most important thing that you can possibly do. And this is why I've been hyping and harping and harping and harping on selling on you're own website so you can get that most important data, that buyer data kind of thing. And its super important to do that.

And the next question is, well if someone is buying from you, do they know they're going to be subscribed to your newsletter? Well you're not ... The concept of a newsletter has been so desperately perverted in the author community because people don't really get it. It's not supposed to actually be ... you don't need to write like a magazine kind of newsletter. And I see this almost universally with authors. And its so hyper ineffective it's not even funny. You don't need like eleven million kinds of things. It's very simply, that you can contact them at some point in the future. That's it.

And you could put a little button down there that says, "Hey, click here to know if you're in the European Union." So if they're a part of that 1% and you want to do that ... And so this comes now, this comes down to the carts, the shopping carts. This is down to the newsletter providers, the auto-responders. Because, they have the ability to geo tag these things. So you could do that, you could send this little message to your use subscribers, if they didn't actually subscribe to your list of their own free will.

So, I mean ... I would definitely dig into this a little bit deeper, but it's not even a point of concern of mine. And maybe it's because, I mean, to put this into perspective I had my entire network of sites one year, was probably 2010-ish '9 and '10 right around in there. Very eventful, '8, '9 and '10 were very eventful years. I was actually hacked by Islamic cyber-terrorists. And so I have a very ... I've sort of been through the crucible of crap with what can happen to a business. I've had a weber suspend pieces of my account because they were like, "Hey, I don't know what you're doing." But I've been with them since 2004 and I love them to death. There's just times where things change and you have to modify what you're doing. And I don't even think this is one of them. This is literally so not a big deal that it's laughable that people are concerned about it. It literally makes no sense.

But, keep that in mind here, that this is a step in a very obvious direction that the marketplace is moving to 100% permission based. And so you would do well to think about this. How are you going to start looking at your business? And I will say one more thing before I sign off here, and that is you probably heard in a previous episode, you know what the good old Zuckerberg had said about the cost of marketing going up. That they have deflated the available inventory. And so more now than ever, Facebook has reached peak saturation for marketing. Everybody is still piling into it, which means there's less inventory now because there's less ... users aren't using it less hours per day, but there's still more marketing going on.

So what that means to you is that your cost is going to go up. And if you don't ... if you're still pushing stuff to Amazon, or if you're still trying to push things to these other distribution platforms. Very rapidly you're going to find yourself in a brutal world of hurt because you will have no idea what your long term customer value is. Not only that, but you will have none of your own customer data. And that is very very very bad, you won't get to see who buys what, when. How much they're spending with you. So it's very important that you start making this shift. And that's why, you know I have the ultimate book selling master class. And it's coming out very soon, you go to AuthorPlatformRocket.com/UBM

Hopefully, there's a page there for you, but it could also be coming soon. Telling you right now.

But yeah, that you could also email, if you'd like a little bit more information about that. But this is something where we've gone through in our own ecosystem and tested it. We brought on a tiny little handful of students, who have worked with us privately, and we tested it. And those who have implemented have already begun making money, which is great. They've been selling on their own site, we've proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that readers will purchase from an author's website. There's zero question now. Yes they also buy from Amazon, which is great, it's free money. But now we have buyer data, we're able to create audiences based off of spending behaviors. Rather than interest targeting. And we're looking at what it costs us to acquire a buyer versus what it costs us to get a click. Because, clicks don't mean anything. Kinda like this GDPR, it doesn't mean anything. It's almost completely irrelevant on every level to virtually every author. Yet, there's been this huge stink about it.

So I like to be at the forefront of things when that stuff is happening. So this GDPR is a great reminder that it is very much time for you to make the shift to selling through your own website.

So, I'd love to see you join me in this, it's AuthorPlatformRocket.com/UBM ... Ultimate Book Selling Masterclass, and I hope to see you in there.

Alright, take care, this is Jonny Andrews, talk to you soon.

Jonny: Alright that does it for another round of AuthorPlatformRocket.com

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