

**Author Platform Rocket  
-Podcast Transcription-**



**[Grow your platform with Social Giveaways](#)**

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. And here is your host and author, marketing veteran, Johnny Andrews.

Johnny Andrews: Alright folks, welcome back. Johnny Andrews here today, and we're going to be talking about, you might be shocked by this, we're going to be talking about marketing. I know, I know, really, on a podcast about marketing for authors? And so my guest today, cause this is part of our Solid Interview Series, is what I'd like to call ridiculously well-rounded in the industry. She and I have been kind of pinging back and forth via email probably I would say for years, at this point. She's an amazingly prolific author, she has also taught marketing at some of the big conferences, the ones you see in New York and Las Vegas where they actually might serve food because they're that boogie and it's really cool. She's got a good head on her shoulders for this stuff. She's also the co-host, and this is, I maybe shouldn't say this like this, but one of my favorite parts about this, she's the co-host of Romance Between the Pages podcast. Which I will admit I

have listened to and I do enjoy. And so without further ado, ladies and gentlemen, Vitoria Danann. How you doing?

Victoria Danann: Excellent Johnny, I am doing so well I do have to say that I know that when you called me well-rounded, that you were talking about my book business and not my figure. And so, we're just going to move right along and assume that's what you meant.

Johnny Andrews: Absolutely, absolutely. I like that, benefit of the doubt, good move.

Victoria Danann: Yes. You betcha.

Johnny Andrews: So I like the fact that you have a podcast. I think that very-

Victoria Danann: Yeah.

Johnny Andrews: Lots of authors that I speak with say hey I think I'd kinda like to do this, but very few of them do because obviously the ... and we'll get into the business of writing in a second, but talk a little bit about your show, give everybody the sort of the over, under on it what's going on there?

Victoria Danann: Okay, I'm glad you asked. About three years ago I was at an author [inaudible 00:02:13] and I just happened to meet somebody, Riley J. Ford, who was there from Orange County. And when we were sitting together at lunch, she just turned to me and said "You know? I wanna do a podcast with you." And I had mulled over the idea of podcasts, but had never been real serious about it, but the two of us just really hit it off. And I do have to say that I think that the chemistry that I just happened to have with her is the foundation and the basics of the show.

Victoria Danann: So I would recommend that anybody who is thinking about a podcast, find a partner that you can, like you said, ping back and forth off of. It makes it a lot easier, especially if you get a guest who is shy, cause that enables you to keep things going. But yeah, we have a lot of fun. We have been doing it for a little over a year now, and have racked up the biggest names in the business, and we have more coming up this next month. We've got Nalini Singh, Jenny McGuire, oh gosh I can't even remember who all. All people who, when my assistant told me they'd been booked, I would go 'No way! Not that person!' So looking forward to it.

Johnny Andrews: That's fantastic. And by the way, we'll put the link in the show notes. But it's Romancecast.com. So totally check it out. It's really cool and she's not kidding. They interview tons of really great authors on that. So, let's kinda get into your background a little bit cause I like that you get out there, you do the teaching, you do the writing. You really do pretty much everything. Kinda give us a background on-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: How you got into this, and your journey.

Victoria Danann: Okay. Well thanks for asking. This is perhaps my seventh or eighth incarnation of a person doing this one lifetime in this body. And this most recent one came about because I was [inaudible 00:04:06] player in a classic rock band. And we got the full rock and roll, just the experience of a breakup with slamming doors and telling each other what we think of each other. And it was so horrible because playing in that band was the best time of my life. But after a few months, I kind of turned to writing for healing, and gosh, it worked out and took off. But for once in my life, I was at the right place, the right time. Put my first book out in May of 2012. And as you know, these days, that's known as the Gold Rush.

Johnny Andrews: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Victoria Danann: But what had happened is I studied up on all of the [inaudible 00:04:53] the traditional publishers, and I got impatient with that after about twenty minutes, and said, "Oh look! There's this thing over here. You can publish your own books." And so I did that. And then the rest of it has been, like you said, a journey. A journey of experimentation because in the beginning, it's like, I put this book up on Amazon, and thought, 'Okay. It's been up for three days and I'm not rich yet. What's the problem?'

Johnny Andrews: I know. Isn't that terrible when that happens?-

Victoria Danann: Yes!

Johnny Andrews: Like, three days?

Victoria Danann: Yes! You just have to start with the, "Okay. How am I going to get this book in front of people who might be readers?" And so the last six years has been more a journey of that, than it has of actually creating the stories and writing the books.

Johnny Andrews: Absolutely. And when we were emailing back and forth, I love it when authors say the same... cause when I say it, that's one thing. On a previous show I made the analogy, it's sort of like telling your children not to do something, and then you tell 'em again cause they didn't do it. And of course they're gonna do it this time, cause that's what it is. But-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: I feel like because I'm a marketing person, people are like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Of course you're gonna say that." But you're an author, straight up. And when you

say the marketing is almost more important than the books, I think it has a bigger impact. So, you go ahead and say that for them.

Victoria Danann: Well, I have always said from the very beginning that if you ask me how I spend my time in front of the computer, I would say that I [inaudible 00:06:21]. I spend 35 percent writing, 65 percent on marketing. And just this morning, I heard somebody refer to the business end, or the marketing end of [inaudible 00:06:37] book career, and dirty work. And I had to laugh out loud. It's like, "Oh my God!" This is not dirty work. In fact for some of us, it's fun. And for those who say that they just wanna write and that they don't wanna have anything to do with the marketing end and the business end, I just have to issue a challenge that if you really feel that way, you can hire it done. One way or another, it has to be done. The marketing gods have got to be fed.

Johnny Andrews: Absolutely.

Victoria Danann: If you don't wanna do it, hire it done. But, I wanna say that, do a little research. Do a little of it yourself. You may find out that there are somethings that you enjoy doing.

Johnny Andrews: Totally. Yeah, that's an important thing is to try it and get good at it. But what's interesting, that I've been finding, and even with some of our agency clients, actually I wouldn't say some of, I would say just shy of all of them, it's more common, is that marketing, there's a lot of elements of it. If you publish yourself like everybody else does, the biggest problem is that these marketing platforms are always evolving, and becoming more, typically more advanced. They normally don't go in the opposite direction. They usually get more advanced and more effective because the more effective they become, then the more... When a marketing platform can deliver to you the outcome that you're looking for, that's when-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: You would be like, I would love to spend more money with you. And they get that. And so they always try to deliver the best stuff they can. The problem is, that, and I wanna say that it began happening around 2016 roughly, is that, just to use the example of Facebook. It started getting the perception of not being effective for authors. But it wasn't that the platform stopped working. It was that it evolved past the publishing's industry's ability to use it in the traditional way. Because-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative), Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: And it was very interesting, and that's why I've been doing these webinars and stuff like that I'm, essentially selling on your own site. Because I would say almost the entire industry is about ten years behind with what's happening in just marketing in general. Not being able to track the analytics, not being able to

see your data or have access to people that buy your books and things like that. And that was okay back in the day when you started, the Gold Rush Era of 2011 and 12. That was fine.

Victoria Danann: Sure and-

Johnny Andrews: Because Amazon had the algorithm that would work.

Victoria Danann: Yeah. But Johnny. You are right about that. But I want to add something onto that, and that is that [inaudible 00:09:04] with those analytics that we really, really, really, need to see, we're not ever gonna see those because the platform doesn't want us to see them.

Johnny Andrews: Exactly.

Victoria Danann: And so, yeah. You mentioned Amazon[inaudible 00:09:18]. And they don't ever intend to change that.

Johnny Andrews: Absolutely. I've referred to them often as a black hole of data. And that's one of the main reasons why-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: I teach folks how to actually sell through their own website cause then you actually can see all that data. And so you can then watch what happens with your advertising and be like "Oh my word! This is working." You can do lead capture and actually see, oh. This is where it's not necessarily the best cost per click. It's not the best cost per lead. It's what gets you th outcome your looking for, which is a sale. What does it cost you-

Victoria Danann: Yeah.

Johnny Andrews: To acquire a buyer. And when you can see that, it completely changes the game.

Victoria Danann: Of course it does. Hey everybody. Don't let what he says scare you if you're scared of math. The math part of this is not hard. I swear. Promise. So go ahead and preach Johnny.

Johnny Andrews: No, no, no. This is you interview. And I like that you've been out there doing all of this stuff, pretty hardcore. Yeah. Just in general, what would be some of your best marketing tips for authors? Let's say they're just getting started, and then we'll kinda move into more advanced stuff.

Victoria Danann: Okay. You really aren't going to get too far without a catalog. So you need to begin with a good book, and then once you finish that good book, start another one as soon as you can because you need to have a few books to sell. It's just like if you open up a corner grocery store, you can't open it up with one sack of

flour. You need some stuff on the shelf before you can start selling. So, get that going, and then once you have some books to sell, you need a little bank roll for advertising, because advertising is key. And that is my number one tip to other authors, is spend money. Because that old thing about you have to spend money to make money, is true. All of the cheap, cost you nothing advertising in the world, isn't gonna get you anywhere.

Victoria Danann: Let me give you an example of the cheap, cost you nothing advertising. All of those fronts on Facebook where you can go and post a link and a photo, "buy my book", and if you have been tracking your results from that, you've gotta know that is just an exercise [inaudible 00:11:36]-

Johnny Andrews: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Victoria Danann: You get what you pay for. And if you pay nothing for that, you're probably gonna get nothing for that because thirty seconds after you posted that, another author posted, and within five minutes, you've been buried under twenty other authors who just did the same thing.

Johnny Andrews: Exactly. Yeah. And a lot of those places, even if you do find an effective one, typically what you then get, is just oceans of people who... And let's say you're trying to do it for platform building and stuff like that. When we work the people, we actually rail against posting any kind of information in there, in places like that because, especially if you go even more broad. Sometimes okay yay, maybe you'll sell a book or something, but probably not. But then some folks go a step even worse, and they'll go into just massive freebie forums, or something. And what happens at that point, is that the people in those areas, they might not even be literate. It's very difficult... Seriously. I'd say that constantly. It's like please don't post there. You might get ten thousand people who sign up for your free book, but half of them might not be able to read. You have to qualify your audiences, and know where you're going and who you're going to.

Johnny Andrews: One of the things that I say is there's really three things that you can go to effectively. AMS ads are great, but you have to understand how they work. Work 'em until they work. Facebook ads are great, especially if you're focused on platform building. It's my absolute number one thing. And then email. So your in-house list-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Along with other authors that are in the genre, if you can get some folks to help you promote. If you use that trifecta right there, you can blow up. You can absolutely kill it. And you don't need to go much [inaudible 00:13:17]-

Victoria Danann: Yeah. I just wanna add a little anecdote to what you just said a minute ago about the free. Occasionally, I will get somebody who will send me a

communication that says "Hey. I just tried to download one of your books, and I discovered that I had downloaded this five years ago."

Johnny Andrews: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Victoria Danann: And so I don't know if the people who are doing all those thousands of downloads are illiterate, but I do know that there is hoarding, and that they will do the one click, they'll download the free book, and then it will sit somewhere in the background on the kindle for literally years, and may never be discovered.

Johnny Andrews: Exactly. Which is interesting cause our chat right now is a little bit more free-form than some of the other ones that I've done. But I like what you just brought up, cause it gives us the opportunity to talk about this. Is the necessity of evolving the autoresponder usage? So the concept of a newsletter has been sort of brutally skewed in the wrong direction, I would say to 98 percent of authors who use the concept of the newsletter. It's vastly more powerful, but it's being used incorrectly. This is one of those webinars that I do all the time, talking about like... Okay. If you're growing your platform focused on newsletter first, which you should be, what ends up happening is, everybody focuses on that initial thing. Get the subscriber, deliver the book. That's only step one and step two. After that, what you need to realize is, there's a whole world of steps because you have to separate the wheat from the chaff.

Johnny Andrews: Because if you wanna be able to get rid of the freebie seekers, there is a way to do that. I call it this, I don't know if you saw my email that I sent out just recently, but if you wanna get rid of freebie seekers, you could, and you're running paid ads to grow your platform, you could do something I call the Bug Spray Ad. And what you start doing at this point, when you sort of evolve as an author in your ability to market, what you're able to do, is target based on behavior, not just interest. Because behavior is a way better indicator off what people are gonna do. And so what you start doing, cause almost every autoresponder out there has the ability to shift people around, or add tags or categories, or something like that based on what they do. And so what you don't want to do is become too timid-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: and say I'm not gonna email these people cause I don't want to-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Unsubscribe. You actually do want them to unsubscribe. That's the big missing piece-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Here. You want to get rid of as many of these fools as possible that have no business being there. And then what you do is you take-

Victoria Danann: Okay.

Johnny Andrews: The people-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Who go through that one thing, who immediately unsubscribe from your newsletter, and you put them into a file, you upload them into Facebook, and you create a custom audience, and you exclude them from your marketing.

Victoria Danann: Okay. And if somebody doesn't want to do that to themselves, can they hire you to do it?

Johnny Andrews: Oh yeah. Yeah. We have an agency where we do that. That's kind of the entire core of author platform rocket, is we do all this stuff for people. Yeah.

Victoria Danann: Alright.

Johnny Andrews: That was fun. I didn't mean that to be a pinch for my [inaudible 00:16:12]. That was super funny. But that's just one of those things that, I've never heard another author say that kind of stuff before. Let alone, how do you use the pixel in all those things. So this is where the industry is right now to where it's heading. It's heading toward more permission based full disclosure kind of stuff, with the whole GDPR thing and Facebook's updated policies and things like that. Which is interesting because if you disclose what you're going to do with people, it actually has almost no bearing on your ability to build a list. I have-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: We've run what? Two thousand ads a day, to build five hundred-

Victoria Danann: Good grief!

Johnny Andrews: Different platforms for... yeah. We've worked with over five hundred authors to build their platforms. And there have been times where we've been running over two thousand ads a day. And what I could tell you beyond a shadow of a doubt, is that being brutally open with people about what it is, that they're signing up for your newsletter, that they're going to get emails from you, and that you're going to give them cool stuff, does not in any way, shape or form, hurt you, it's very strange. Everyone's terrified of doing it now. There's all these check boxes. You don't need check boxes. You just need to be up front with-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).



Johnny Andrews: Easy to understand [inaudible 00:17:20].

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: It's really easy. So. No, that's what I like about it, cause when you got started, you had been doing a lot of those things. I'm sure you played around with the Thunderclap, right?

Victoria Danann: Everything that came along, I tried it. And I think I told you before we did the show, that some of the stuff I actually pioneered, like takeovers, and like author days where we would just do one author every half hour and have a big event where people could come and talk to people, and then the beginning, nobody had ever done anything like that before, and so it was fresh, it was new, and it had an enormous impact. But it's just like striking a match. There was a big flare, and then before you know it, that's burned out. And marketing experiments can be like that. You can happen upon this idea that may give you a big boost, and that has value. But it may be over just about as soon as it starts. So, yeah. Of course I did the Thunderclap. I did it one time.

Johnny Andrews: There you go. And that's about how many times it worked. Cause I see authors all the time trying to do that, what has evolved into. And one of the things that we do with a lot of folks, is we let 'em rent space on our page. Yeah they do takeovers every now and then, but they do Facebook Live with our audience. So you know [inaudible 00:18:33] since just under 180,000 or something like that, fans-

Victoria Danann: Yeah.

Johnny Andrews: And those videos-

Victoria Danann: Yeah, no-

Johnny Andrews: It's crazy though-

Victoria Danann: The takeovers of the events, they really don't work anymore.

Johnny Andrews: Yeah. That's why we switched 'em to the Facebook Live because putting a face on video, in front of those people has-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Incredible reach. We had one lady do it, and she did a three minute video, and I believe she was at an event. One of those writing events. And it was seen over 45,000 times in the first I wanna say-

Victoria Danann: Wow!

Johnny Andrews: Three days. Yeah.

Victoria Danann: I'm gonna call that success.

Johnny Andrews: Yeah. It did really well. And then he just put a little link in the description. I usually recommend these things as a catalyst to platform building, not necessarily like a direct sale to your books. But give 'em something for free. Let people meet you, and just kind of gravitate towards you. Build your followers, build your subscribers. And it works beautifully like that.

Victoria Danann: Sure.

Johnny Andrews: But selling the books, is a little different. You need to have that bubble of humans around you that like what you write.

Victoria Danann: Of course.

Johnny Andrews: Yeah.

Victoria Danann: Don't we all love that.

Johnny Andrews: Absolutely. So, what's next for you on the horizon here? What's your primary focus?

Victoria Danann: More money.

Johnny Andrews: That's fair.

Victoria Danann: Yeah. I'm always after more, more, more. And what I do, is I pick out two or three people who are making more than I am, and I chase them until I overtake 'em. And like you said, for me the study on what's working now, is not a daily part of my routine. It is certainly a weekly part of my routine. Because as you said, that we are constantly changing and evolving. I have no idea where we will be five years from now.

Johnny Andrews: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Victoria Danann: People may be reading books that are holographic and look like movies. I don't know. Who knows what we'll be doing. But the fact is, is that whatever it is, it's not what we're doing today. So, if we wanna be successful, we have to be constantly paying attention, or hiring somebody who is.

Johnny Andrews: Yeah, exactly. And that's a big one for I think a lot of folks. And this is what I'm learning, teaching actively folks about this whole selling on your own website thing, is there is a group of early adopters in this, that are just taking it head on and doing phenomenally well cause they overcame that learning curve. And that's kind of the message that I want everyone to hear, is that there's going to

be, with everything you do, there's always a learning curve, but it's vital to embrace it-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Victoria's totally right. You need to be where the industry is going, not where it was.

Victoria Danann: You bet.

Johnny Andrews: It's very important.

Victoria Danann: If you're gonna be where it was, you might as well go into traditional [inaudible 00:21:15].

Johnny Andrews: Oh, yeah. Don't even get me started on that. But yeah-

Victoria Danann: [crosstalk 00:21:19]

Johnny Andrews: You're totally right. It's one of those situations where I don't think authors need to be more advanced than the industries. There's that, who is that? Wayne Gretzky or some hockey player who's like, "How are you so good?" And there he's like, "Well because I look to where the puck is going to be, not where it is." And you don't necessarily need to be where the books are going. Just don't be where they were.

Victoria Danann: Yes.

Johnny Andrews: Be where they are right now. That's fine, because this industry is not particularly super technical. And that's okay. It's totally fine to be in the moment at the time. But the problem is, there's been a massive evolution, and the marketing platforms have shifted. And the needs of the authors have now been exposed, because everyone was riding the Amazon algorithm. And people are still trying to do it. The problem is, with over a million books being self-published every year, it can't support that many people in terms of exposure. You need to start getting your own-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Data. Doing that stuff yourself. That's where the industry, it is there now. And it will become increasingly more painful for authors that don't evolve into the moment. I spoke to a fella who was looking for some private consulting a couple of months ago, and they were talking about creating their own platform and using blockchain technology for purchases. I'm like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa." You don't need to be 2030. That's okay. You can send 'em a book, the normal way, and charge 'em money-

Victoria Danann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Johnny Andrews: Like a normal person. You don't need to use cryptocurrency exchange methodology, yet. Cause it's not mainstream. But it was just interesting seeing him trying to be where the market is going. Cause you never know. Technology evolves, so. Awesome. So, I wanted to thank you for coming on here. Where can folks find more about you, and your show, and your books, and all of those things?

Victoria Danann: Well, the website is, guess what? Victoriadanann.com, but Victoria D-a-n-a-n-n-like Dan Ann. The links to the podcast are also on there. Everything there is to know about the book. Where they've been, where they are, and where they're going. And of course I can be followed on Amazon. I can be followed on Facebook under the same name. Under Twitter under vdanann, and that's really all that counts.

Johnny Andrews: I love it. Perfect. Awesome.

Victoria Danann: Yep.

Johnny Andrews: Well thank you so much for coming on.

Johnny Andrews: Alright. That does it for another round of authorplatformrocket.com. Remember, we're here to help you with your business, marketing, and mindset. So 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](mailto:show@authorplatformrocket.com). And 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 the love and assistance. But 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](http://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.

- <https://www.AuthorPlatformRocket.com>
- [Grow your platform with Social Giveaways](#)