

Author Platform Rocket
-Podcast Transcription-



Author Platform Rocket

A Faster Path To Becoming A 6 Figure Author

Guest: Matthew Thrush

With **Jonny Andrews**

[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's your host and author, marketing veteran, Jonny Andrews.
- Jonny: All right. Ladies and germs, welcome back. Today's gonna be a fun one, 'cause it's gonna be a little bit different. It's not your conventional "I write novels and publish them" kind of thing, but we're going to talk to a gentleman who has quite the story arch of his own, and that is Matthew Thrush. Hopefully I'm saying that right, 'cause I can read-
- Matthew: You nailed it.
- Jonny: Perfect! I love it. I'm not going to give you a big, flowery intro, because I don't think it's necessary, because I think, like I said, your story arch of person doing the thing you do to get to where you are has to speak for itself. So, why don't you give everybody a breakdown of where you were and then where you are, and then we'll talk about what you did to get there.
- Matthew: Sure. All right. So, like he said, my name is Matthew, and I write novels full time as my primary business, but it wasn't always that way. As many of you might have the goal and

the dream to write full time, whether that's writing novels, copywriting, things of that nature, so I had that dream since I was a child. Basically over the years I was doing it and doing it, but I wasn't treating it like a full time job.

As a foundation we'll start with in 2015 I had about \$85,000 of debt from, not all bad choices, but I'll call them bad choices in the sense that I didn't need the debt. I just thought, "Hey, this is free money, I'll take it. Sure, here's another credit card. Oh, here's a student loan that I don't need. Okay, I'll take it." So, in January 2015 I had \$85,000 in debt roughly. I had no job, so I hadn't had a job for about eight months, and I was trying to get them. I had applied and interviewed, like actually going to interviews phone and in person for over 100 jobs during that time and the typical thing or response that I received was, "You're overqualified. Why do you want this job? You should be managing us." Basically whenever someone thinks you're overqualified, they think that you might be leaving them, it's a stepping stone job, which maybe it's true or not.

So, I had that. I had \$100 in my account. I suffered from anxiety, depression, and chronic pain on a daily basis, and was basically just super depressed and down on myself and wondering basically, "What's going on? Why does my life stink so much?" And just pointing the finger at everything that I could to blame everything instead of saying, "Well, I'm the one that made the choices."

In 2015 I came to the conclusion of, all right, if I really want to give writing a shot, I have to actually give it a shot, so treat it like a full time job. At that point I didn't want to live with any what-ifs in my life. So, at that time I had gotten a job as a technical writer for a company in Houston, really good job. I was like, all right for full time jobs, you go there every single day. You work there. You try to get promotions and raises and work your way up in the company, things of that nature. You think about it. You train. So, I said, "Well, if I want to give writing a shot, then I need to treat it like that. I need to treat it like a full-time career and a position."

What I did at that point was basically I read as many books as I could, took a lot of webinars, seminars, went to conferences, things of that nature. Just from people doing what I wanted to do. The key is you need to surround yourself with like minded people who are either on the way to where you want to be or already there, so that you can be taught and trained up. Mentorship is huge. I sought mentors so they could basically help me change my mindset, and learn the skills if I didn't already have them to create this.

I started that in 2005, I mean, not 2005, January 2015, sorry. And just for the next I wanna say roughly four or five months, I just that's all I did was train and kept writing. I wrote every single day. My minimum for me was at least 2,500 or 5,000 words a day to write. For some of you it might just be writing like maybe 50 words or 100 words. For me, I liked setting higher goals, because I'm competitive like that for myself. I knew if I set something like 100 words, I wouldn't take it seriously. If I set something like 2,500 or 5,000 words you have to sit down and commit to doing that to get that every day.

So I did that from 2015 basically until March of 2017, then in March of 2017, I made the goal of okay, I have this information. I have this knowledge. I've learned these skills. I've developed these things. I know that I have a readership that likes my style, because one

of the things I did was I wrote a test experimental on a site called Wattpad, just to see, "Hey, do I have what it takes to do this full time?" After that story won a bunch of awards and had over a million reads, and things of that nature, I was pretty solidified. I can do this. So, in March 2017, I made a new goal for myself.

So the first goal was treat it like a full time job. The second goal, now was make it my full time job. So the goal was by the end of that year was I would quit my job as a technical writer to write novels full time, so that gave me a ten month span. Initially I wanted to try to do it for six months, but I still had the what-ifs and there was still scariness involved, and the risk and stuff. The end of the year, that give me a little bit of buffer room. I did it in less than four months.

Jonny: Nice.

Matthew: I quit my job to write full time in less than four months, and then basically earned six figures. I more than almost tripled what I was making as a technical writer within four months, and that's continuing to scale up. Now it's shifting into getting closer to the point of it could be multi six figure to potentially getting to seven figures in a few years of so, because of consulting, and mentoring, and coaching 'cause so many people are asking, "Hey, what did you did? How do I do it? Can you show me?" And I'm like, "All right. I like teaching so, I'll tell you how to do it." So far, the people that have taken my advice, they're having similar success as well. Success is kind of subjective. It depends on what you want to achieve, but if writing full time is the goal, you can do it. There's a lot of different ways to do it. For me it was through ghost writing.

Jonny: Excellent. I was jut going to ask you to clarify that one, 'cause that's an important point to make is you can charge a lot more to write a book for somebody than you will if somebody buys your book. It's one of those things that I think a lot of- it's a very frustrating business if you're trying to make it as an author a lot of times, because it's such a labor of love and whatnot, and your margins are razor thin. But what you're doing - you're still writing the books, and with a ghost writing kind of situation, you'll get paid way more money to do that. So that's a big thing to think about when I talk about the marketing, the advertising things, and I could show people, like oh, look at this, well, we ran these promos and it worked like this and you can see the transparency of it where it's like we got this many clicks to this many offers and we sold this. It's typically not selling like a 99 cent book. That is one good way to do that is if you sell more expensive stuff.

Matthew: Yep.

Jonny: You need to sell less of it-

Matthew: Oh, yeah.

Jonny: -to earn way more. So that is-

Matthew: Yeah, your return investments substantially increase. Your stress levels severely reduce because for example, you did online courses, you only sell a handful a month and you make six figures. So, you brought up a good point basically before I did this I had to decide well, do I- I didn't know about ghost writing at the time, I discovered it through the movie Ghost Writer, and I don't really remember, because while I was watch-

Jonny: That Ewan McGregor one?

Matthew: Yeah.

Jonny: Where he was-

Matthew: Yeah.

Jonny: I remember that one, yeah.

Matthew: Yep, he was the ghost writer. So, I was watching that one night, and I was thinking, "Man, how am I going to make this possible? How am I going to do this?" Movie came on, I was watching it, was like, it's okay, and then a thought came to my mind, why not be a ghost writer. Then I spent the whole movie, that whole night and the next week or so researching it, finding out how I could do it.

So, to your point which is basically dealing with how many books you have to sell, the marketing, things of that nature, I had to decide, because one of the things is pride and ego as a writer. You want people to know you wrote something and have your name on it, especially if it does well. So my thought was this: I'm a numbers guy. I analyze everything, and so I did the numbers. I said, "All right well, if I wrote my own books and published them, here are the things that I would have to do to make that happen." I had some success with marketing, but it's a lot of work and a lot of time. For me I just wanted to focus more on the writing aspect if I was able to do that. I did the numbers, and I only did e-books. How many e-books do I have to sell at \$3.99 for 70% royalties? So I did the conservative, the best scenario deal, and at the time my goal was \$10,000 a month. That's what I wanted, so what would I need to do? I think that was roughly 2,200 books- well not, it's a lot more than that. I think that's for 2,500, but basically-

Jonny: No, you keep talking. I'm gonna do the math on this 'cause this, I love this stuff.

Matthew: So I wanted to earn \$10,000 a month. How many e-books at \$3.99 at 70% would I have to sell each month to make that? It's several thousand. So, I want to say it's over 4,000, but I don't remember.

Jonny: It's 3,585.

Matthew: Say that one more time.

Jonny: 3,585 and I said keeping \$2.80 a sale.

Matthew: Okay, yeah. So, see now obviously if you have more books that goes down, but for my purposes of decision making it was real basic. If I have one book what would I need to do. Basically 3,500 books you'd have to sell each month to do that. That is a lot of work if you're starting off and don't have a platform or things of that nature.

Well, now I have these numbers if I did it my way. What if I ghost write. For ghost writing it's broken down into things like fixed rate and hourly rate. A fixed rate is kind of like a per word rate. So I decided, well if I'm conservative and I say two or three cents per word that I would charge starting off. How many books would I need to ghost write each month to do it? I think initially I started with four cents per word as my rate. Now it's, for fiction, it's 15 cents a word for non-fiction it's 25 cents a word, 'cause it's gone up because the demand has super increased.

I think starting off if was four or five cents per word, which would mean I would only have to write one or two books depending on the rate, per month at 50,000 words per book.

Jonny: Well, right now let's say 'cause at 15 cents per word, you're at \$7500 per 50,000 words.

Matthew: For one book.

Jonny: Yeah. That's one book and you're basically at your goal. I like that. You set a floor and you're like how's it going to work out where I can get to that. You touched on this one and I want to kind of bring it back up, 'cause this is a really good idea I think for a lot of people, and it's super funny because I had no intention of selling a business opportunity, but it kind of feels like we should pitch them on something here.

I want you to think about this for a second, you at home listening.

If you are already hitting minimum word counts and things like that, and you're already publishing, and you're just not building that audience and whatnot, but you're still a good writer. Your stuff is well reviewed. This might be something to supplement your income with.

Matthew: Oh, yeah. If not short term, long term. Depends. You know?

Jonny: Right.

Matthew: Depends on your goal. It's definitely a short term thing to help you give more time to develop what you need to get to where your passive income is more scalable and you don't have to worry about it too much.

Jonny: A hundred percent. The other thing to consider is, like I said, this doesn't have to be a permanent solution. It can be a rapid and very effective temporary fix to a massive problem which is how do you get the money to market enough of your own fiction? Well, if you're getting say \$3,000, \$4,000 even starting out with a couple of these books

doing this for other people. You only need to do that a few times to be able to bank roll your own career.

Matthew: Oh, yeah.

Jonny: Some of our agency clients that have come in, one of them in particular had a really savvy business model and she was a writer. She did her own stuff, of course. But she also was working with ghost writers who were already very good, like New York Times Bestselling traditionally published authors. What she did was she'd pay them a reduced rate, then do a royalty split. So, there's always that kind of option too, and their name would go on the book.

Matthew: Oh, yeah.

Jonny: So her name and that name.

Matthew: So ghost writing at the very basic level is someone pays you paid for hire service type thing. At the basic level someone pays you to write a book for them, they have all the rights. However, there's a lot of different things that go into involved. There's a lot of negotiation. If you are, like you're saying, some of these ghost writers that work with celebrities or other- so for example James Patterson, he does this a lot. He hires ghost writers as his co-authors. Now there's a lot more to it, 'cause he's more invested in it. He actually writes with them, but it's essentially the same thing. He's like the best person doing it. You have someone write for you and a lot of time they are, like you said, they are number one Amazon best sellers, USA Today best sellers, NY Times best sellers of their own stuff traditionally or self published and these people recruit them because you have the skill, you have the knowledge, you know the tropes of all the genres and sub-genres. They know that you're committed and dedicated and you can stick to a deadline things of that nature. You're a professional.

Then that's how you really make a killing as a ghost writer. That's another thing with the ghost writing is you start off as the basic goal is supplement some short term income so I can do what I want to do, but what you'll learn is, it's all about networking. As you're writing these things, you're gonna start meeting people, you're gonna learn some other things about yourself and the industry. So, you're gonna start developing friendships with people, then other business opportunity will come about with it, and it might escalate, hey someone paying you \$1,500 per book to James Patterson wants you to write with him. Your name's gonna be on the book with him. You have a royalty split, and now you're a number one New York Times Best Seller along James Patterson selling millions of copies. That's not even the best. There could be things way better than that, but that's how it can scale up really quick or take some time.

Obviously you're scaling your work ethic, but it's not as cut and dry or black and white as you may think. There's a lot of opportunity that come from it that you might not be aware of, so you're absolutely right.

Jonny: One thing that I always- like how would you go about say, sourcing clients for this kind of thing, like do you have any tips for these folks on this?

Matthew: Sourcing as in hiring a ghost writer or me acting as a ghost writer?

Jonny: You as a ghost writer. As a ghost writer going up and drumming up business.

Matthew: Okay. So, my number one suggestion for people is- 'cause this is where I started off with 100% of my work coming from there and now it's about 50% or less because now I get a lot of referrals, but there's a site called Upwork.

Jonny: Ah, yes. My favorite.

Matthew: Upwork is amazing. There's a lot of sites like it, but it's the best one and the number one one. There are millions of jobs on Upwork. For various skills and talents. There's tons of jobs on there for writing. Description, blurb writing, copywriting, copy editing, ghost writing, creative writing, whatever, you name it. There's a ton of jobs out there.

My number one suggestion would be create an account on Upwork, because it's free. Why wouldn't you? It's free. Then search for jobs that interest you. Then you submit a proposal. The proposals, my number one key for that would be you keep it short. The mindset you should always have when you approach this - this is just a little bit of advice to help you if you're gonna go this route to help you land some more jobs initially - here's the thing, you have to visualize clients like people, because that's who they are.

They're gonna get a lot of proposals. So how do you make yourself shine? All right. So the idea is understanding the psychology of the client. The client is probably busy. They have their own job, their own side jobs, their own [inaudible 00:16:22]. That's why they're hiring a ghost writer for example, because they're trying to save time. So, you have to know that they're trying to scale their business in some way to save them time and things of that nature. So, the proposal needs to be short so that you save them time, because they're gonna get a ton they don't want to spend all day reading through them. A short proposal, yes you can add some highlights to your experience, your background, things of that nature, but my number one thing that I would all you to help you land more jobs is this: focus on how you can help them achieve their goal.

Whatever their goal is, whatever their vision is, you have to have that personal connection. Make it about that. Don't make it about the work. Don't make it about the rate or the turnaround time or your experience even. Make it about like a dialogue: from your job post this is what it seems like you want to achieve. Here are some tips. And offer them tips. Even if they don't even hire you, offer tips in the proposal. Here's what I think you could try or do that might help you scale up to what you want to achieve. Then say I would love to do a quick 30 minute call with you to talk more about your goal and your vision and how we might be able to get that or find someone else who can help you. All right? 'Cause that's immediately gonna stick out from everyone else who has a page full of text. Full of, hey, here's why you should hire me. Please hire me. Please hire me, and the desperation in there.

If you make it about how can I serve you, how can I help you, actually expect to lose the job, but still have helped someone, you will land way more jobs at significantly higher what their budget rate is that they list on there, and then you're doing what you love and you're helping people. You're doing what you love, and you're getting fulfillment because you're helping someone else who will probably become a long-term client.

Jonny: Absolutely. That was probably the best advice I have ever heard for anyone on Upwork, and if I could broadcast into the job postings, when I'm trying to hire someone. If they could just know that, that'd be great. I might have to- 'cause one thing that I do to kind of get rid of the agencies in the box or whatever it is, I always have a line in there, begin your response to me with like some absolutely off the wall thing. I'm like three fat cats ran fast because they could. So, what I do is I immediately delete the ones that didn't say that.

Matthew: They don't have that at the beginning so-

Jonny: Exactly. 'Cause we call that "previews of coming attractions". Like if I need someone to do some detailed work for me, and they can't even get the first detail.

Matthew: If they can't even read through your whole job post to see that you wrote that at the bottom, then they obviously didn't take the time to read it, and how invested could they be? You know?

Jonny: Oh, totally. Yeah, so if you do go down this road, definitely do not just sit there and copy and paste some form letter in there.

Matthew: Yeah. You can have a template, but customize it specifically to that person. And one way you can do that is if you can find their name, put their name on there, and sometimes if they've done work prior you can go through the reviews and feedback and sometimes previous freelancers will have mentioned their name. You can introduce it, "Hey good evening, good morning, so and so" and make it a little more personable. Keep it short and stuff.

Use a template 'cause it saves you time, but customize it specifically to what they mentioned in the job listing of what they want as well as the skills that they said were important to them.

Jonny: Yeah, so definitely make it about them, not all about "I can do the job the best because ...", because that just gets really redundant and-

Matthew: Oh, yeah. 'Cause the truth is there are thousands of people that can write just as well, but that's not really what they want. Yes, they want the job done, but the trick is when someone's hiring someone, the main concern that they're thinking consciously, emotionally, subconsciously is, "If I hire you, is the world gonna blow up and fall out on me?"

It's basically you're eliminating that concern that risk is, "hey, I'm the right person, not necessarily the skills, if you hire me, you can have complete trust and faith that the world's not about to end and you're not making a terrible business decision." That's like the underlying factor to always keep in your mind is, that's all they want. They want reassurance.

Jonny: Absolutely. Yeah, I'm excited about this one just because this is a great idea I think for a lot of folks. I do like the fact that you addressed the ego thing.

Matthew: Oh, yeah.

Jonny: There are so many authors, 'cause obviously I get emails minutely almost of people that's like, "Hi, I'm totally struggling, completely broke, what can I do?" Do this. Duh? Like here. This.

Matthew: Yeah. I understand.

Jonny: It's so funny, because I never even thought about that, but a lot of folks I think the hurdle is going to be just getting out of their own head, and be like well I want it to be about me and my work. It's like, well, maybe there's a way a little further down.

Matthew: The main thing is it's all balance. You have to think about long-term goals. If writing full time is your dream, it's a long-term goal. You're not wanting it to, hey I wanna write full time for a year. You're thinking for the rest of y life mentality. You have to plan the plan for the long-term and you se these short-term goals, which is, okay ghost writing might help me get there faster than me writing on own books.

You have to see which ways are more efficient for your times, resources, things of that nature, to get there, because it's more than just the time. It's your sanity that you're working with. Ghost writing is a viable option, so it could turn into a long-term, or it's just hey, I'll do this until I reach this next milestone. Then I'll use this for this next milestone, which all gets you to your ultimate goal which is writing full time. Basically getting to the point to where you're making so much passive income from your stuff that you technically don't need to work. If you're doing what you love, it's not work. So, you're gonna get up every single day and keep writing anyway. Even if you're passive income is \$50,000 a month, you're gonna keep writing anyway, 'cause you love it.

Jonny: Absolutely. Now let's talk about all the stock tips that we can give them that they can buy with all this amazing money they're gonna have. No. This is great. It's super funny, 'cause I absolutely didn't think about really piece that together. We're getting to the end of this thing here, but I wanted to really thank you for this, because I think it can do a lot of good for a lot of people. So, where could everybody go and hunt you down to get more info?

Matthew: It's funny that you mentioned that because I recently did an article for Nick Stephenson on his blog about this kind of- and I kept it high level, because I kept getting so many people emailing me saying, "Hey I want to do this, tell me more. I have all these

questions." I make it personal. I respond to every single email, but man was that killing my hands, because I wanted to help them.

So I created a private Facebook page then. It's called The Author Road Map to Ghost Writing. The only purpose of creating it was people can join it if they want to learn about ghost writing, they can go in there, they can ask questions, I respond. In the group already there are people who have already been ghost writing for a long time too, so they offer suggestions as well. It's basically a mastermind community group of like minded people trying to achieve similar goals. There's a lot of groups out there for different niches and stuff, but this is specific for ghost writing. If you want to try ghost writing, join the group if you want. Say, hey, my name is, here's what I'm trying to achieve, here's where I am, how can you help me, and ask some questions, and I'll respond to you.

The big thing that I do on there is I believe that we are blessed to be a blessing to others, and I talk about this. I always paint the picture to people of if you really want to have an abundant life, you have to think this way. So, the scarcity mindset which most people have is this: your fists are clenched tight, your knuckles will go white from squeezing so hard. You're like, "I will not let go of what I have." Because to be abundant in every aspect of your life you have to give. The more giving you are, the more generous you are, things of that nature, the more you help others, the more you actually receive, more than just financial stuff, there's a lot of other things. At the root, this is the scarcity mindset. You'll keep everything you have, but you can't get any more, 'cause nothing else can get in there.

The abundant mindset is this. Your hands are open, so you're like this, you're giving. So, pretend the blessings or the extra opportunities or the money or the better health of whatever you're trying to achieve is a pitcher of water, and you just pour it into your hand. So, naturally you're gonna get a lot more than you had, but the excess will fall over your hands to everyone else around you. The root purpose of the group is this: we're trying to help each other. There's no such thing as "Well, if I help someone else, then I'm hurting myself because now they got the job over me." There are way too many jobs out there to have that kind of mindset.

Helping someone else, say you help 20 other people get a job while you're talking to a client. "Hey, I'm not quite the right fit, but I know someone who is, can I forward their email to you?" They get the job, that's gonna help everyone else. In the group I post a lot of jobs that I find on Upwork or from past clients, 'cause I get a lot of invites every single day from clients on there, and I can't say yes to them or they're not right for me, so I post those in the group, and then I help people, "Hey, if you need help with your proposal writing, send it to me, I'll give you some suggestions to kind of change it or coach you up and then go for it. And that's how people have landed a lot of jobs. If you want to consider ghost writing, I would join the group if you want. It's called The Author Road Map to Ghost Writing. That's all it is. It's just a community, so if you want to join, feel free.

I'll greet you. I'll help you however I can. There's a lot of work, so I constantly post stuff in there, so if noting else, you won't have to search as much. I'll say, "Hey, here's ten jobs you can consider", and you won't even have to each Upwork for yourself.

Jonny: Well, that's fantastic. All right. Go there, I'll put the link in the show notes. That was probably a way easier solution. I was thinking, oh, all right, join the Facebook group. Go get jobs. So, you know what's really awesome about this? I think we just ended poverty in the author community.

Matthew: No, look I'm telling you that's the best way to do it. There is not shortage of traffic. There is not shortage of jobs out there. It's just when you get your mindset around that, there's already abundance everywhere especially if you're in American. If you help each other, everyone gets there quicker.

Jonny: Totally. I love that. Awesome. Seriously, I'm super happy you came on. So, thanks for responding to the email first of all. That was-

Matthew: Oh, yeah. No problem.

Jonny: Awesome. Cool. All right. Well, we're gonna be signing off here. Thanks for sticking with the show legitimately. If you're struggling with your career go click the link in the show notes and go join that group. This is ridiculous not to go do. Do it! There you go. That's my call to action.

Jonny: All right, that does it for another round of Author Platform Rocket.com. Remember we're here to help you with your business, marketing and mindset. So if you have questions, want us to cover a topic, or interview a special guest, just shoot an email over to show@authorplatformrocket.com. And as always we need you 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. 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. 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.

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