

Author Platform Rocket  
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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, Jonny Andrews.

Jonny Andrews: What's going on, folks? Jonny Andrews here, wanted to welcome you to the show. Today, what we're gonna talk about is why social media doesn't work for authors. I guess I could have called this a bunch of different things like, social media is dead, but I didn't want to be that completely dramatic. But you know what? Why not? Social media is dead. Welcome to it. In this episode, we're gonna talk about why social media is dead and what you could do to really fix it. All right? Let's go.

Here's the problem that we see constantly when authors come in. There was a wonderful email that I had some time ago from an author who was asking, because based on her information, what she has read, she has been engaging and getting into social media, and she's on Twitter. She's on Facebook. She's on Instagram. She's doing everything correctly, yet for some reason, it's really not happening. She's not getting the traction. It's not translating into book sales. The reason why is because, of course not. And so, what I want to do in this one is I'm gonna break down, at least for us, some of the three biggest social media

platforms and exactly how they are failing sort of the author community. Let's just frame it within that kind of stuff.

Does social media marketing even work? What was interesting is one of those marketing guru people emailed a blog post today, which was probably ... Or I'm sorry, not today. I think it might've been this most recent weekend here. I have to tell you, it was one of the most slickest advertorials I think I've seen in the past five years. An advertorial is where they lead in with a pressing problem and then really give you some very good helpful content that leads you to the conclusion that, you know what? I probably should work with this person. I'm telling you. This stuff was absolutely amazing, and so there were a lot of very interesting points he touched on.

He was talking about Gary Vaynerchuk. If you're familiar with him, he's sort of ... He's everywhere, essentially. He's a big marketing guy. He came out of the wine industry, and now he's one of the biggest agencies in the world and he's just grown the crap out of this. He's all over social media. The big question there was, well, in an interview that he did, specifically for authors, he had said that if authors get out there and create an Instagram or a Twitter account for their book characters, that it would be the difference between, say, like 400 copies and 6,000. I don't remember the exact numbers he put out there.

Well, I clicked on a link to check that thing out, and sure enough, that was kind of the point he was making. Here's the problem, though. That was in 2013. It's been a few minutes since then, and these platforms have very much matured. Now prior to 2013, places like, say, Facebook would allow organic reach on the business pages. What that means is, when you posted something, people would see it just like it was Uncle Carl from down the road that posted his fishing pictures where he's in the back of his boat on his on his diver kind of thing. I don't know why that just popped into my head, but it totally did, so we're gonna run with it, but that's the point, is that it used to be, many years ago, that social media was an organic platform where if you posted, people would see it.

Now the point that was made in this article was that even with those numbers, and I kind of need to see, 'cause there was no date on when this thing was published, so it might be equally as old. I do not know, but what I can tell you is that the author of this was completely correct, that social media doesn't sell books. It really doesn't. That's not the purpose of it, and so that's not the point, and so the biggest problem is that the vast majority of authors are out there sort of, "Buy my book," "Buy my book," "Buy my book," "Buy my book." "I got a launch. Here's the cover reveal." Here's all these different things that aren't really effective tactics in those areas, and so yes, social media doesn't work like that. That's not what it is at all, and so that's why I wanted to cover some of the main platforms for me.

The big one is, and this is another thing that came from Gary V. and literally this morning as I was preparing the breakfast with the family before I sent them off to school, I had this thing going. I got my little wireless headset, so I'm bopping

around the kitchen doing this set and what have you. All of a sudden, Gary V. pops on and he's talking about why so many people, just in general, are having a really hard time getting the kind of traction and the kind of movement out of social media. This was a more recent one. It was a wonderful analogy that he gave, which was ... I'm gonna give it to you right now.

Basically, what he was saying was, a lot of people are just posting out there, but then they're not re-engaging with the folks who are doing the comments and stuff. This is just one of many points, but the analogy he gave, which I thought was absolutely brilliant, was like, okay, let's say you host a dinner party and you cook the greatest food in the world, and all of your friends come over, and then you put the food on plates and you put the food in front of them, and you thank them all for coming and then you walk out and just don't sit there and eat with them. That would be super weird. Well, basically, that's what's going on for a lot of folks. I'm not gonna say that problem is universal 'cause a lot of authors, I think, do re-engage with their fans, but just sort of the business in general, that is a problem.

If you happen to be one of the people that will post and then probably forget about it for a while, make sure that you go in there and re-engage because there is a conversation to be had there. It's also good to police your posts because trolls. I talked about those in a different show, so we don't need to get into those today, those ugly little beasties. Yeah, you want to be actively policing that kind of stuff because there are some jerks out there, shocking, but I digress.

So, social media, what does it actually do for you? The other big point of this article was that a big following does not necessarily mean that you're gonna have good numbers, and that's 100% accurate. You do not need to be an Instagram booty chick or something like that in order to be able to be able to move weight. That's funny on a lot of levels. I'm cracking myself up with that one now, but what you do need to have is an engaged audience. I'll give you another example.

We have a client that we work with, actually local, who ships prime and wagyu. I think I'm saying that right, so like excessively high-end steaks, and various fancy meats, and things like that. I know, shocking, [inaudible 00:06:06], but we do a lot of their marketing strategy, and Facebook marketing, and social media, and all that kind of stuff for them. One thing that we've noticed is they have 8,000 followers on Instagram. If they'll post something, we'll drop a cool looking picture of something that they're cooking and it's gonna pop off like crazy, but here's the even more important piece.

In Facebook, in Twitter, and in Instagram that I'll talk about just right now, the high-profile, high-professional stuff doesn't do as well. It's just candid life shots. For example, if they were to do a tasting party or something like that and they take a couple of candid pictures of people holding up, say, a tomahawk ribeye. These things are massive. They literally look like tomahawk. It's nuts. They're

gonna get 200 likes on that with a ton of comments. People are gonna share that around and it's gonna be great, but when a professional photograph is posted, there's less engagement with it.

The reason why is because social media, people out there are looking for real. They're looking to engage with stuff. They don't necessarily want to engage with a company. They want to know the people behind it. That's something to keep in mind. That's a big reason why social media doesn't work for authors. Let's just get back to the theme. Social media is dead. Here's what I want you to do, because organic traffic is a perilous road because one day that traffic is gonna get turned off. Case in point is Facebook. Later in 2013, that's when they began to really cramp down on any sort of organic traffic that was coming out of those [inaudible 00:07:33] pages. If you were there at that time, you absolutely felt every inch of that because suddenly your posts were reaching 1% of your audience when it used to be 15, 20, 30% and stuff like that.

Well, here's the reality of this, is that this is a common thing that happens everywhere. It happened with Google back in the day. SEO, or search engine optimization, is essentially very much a pay-to-play kind of situation at this point. I mean, it really is in most mature markets. Facebook is absolutely 100% that, and so what I want you to start doing is shifting your thoughts away from social media being social media. I want you to think about it in terms of social advertising, all right? All advertising is ... It's not a bunch of buy my stuff, buy my stuff, buy my stuff. Social advertising is where you are putting content in front of people that is interesting and fun, and then you're engaging with it.

What you're trying to do here, and this is a huge problem and another big reason why trying to win with organic traffic that is not sort of a paid ad or something, 'cause you can control that. If it starts working really well, you can spin it up. You can spin it down, but free traffic, oh, that's perilous. I mean, I have watched many of business go from making millions of dollars a month to getting completely wiped out because of one of those animal named algorithm changes just in Google, alone, same thing with Facebook.

If people were hoping to get that kind of free stuff, meh, same thing with Twitter. All right, the problem with Twitter is that it's so freakin' noisy in there, we have run a lot of ads. I don't even have it pulled up in front of me, but we spent enough money just testing this running Twitter ads, and we were able to get our own rep, finally. What was really interesting is that we found out, number one, that evidently, the ads were so effective that we had one of the highest click through rates on the planet. I was like, yeah, that's cool, but his other suggestion was, don't run ads in Twitter. I mean, think about that. That's our rep who works for Twitter telling us that.

Here's why. It's been finally proven out that Twitter is, what I like to call it, enclosed ecosystem. What that means is, people engage on the platform, but they don't necessarily go clicking on stuff. I've mentioned this in a few other shows, but it's something that you want to keep in mind because when you do

that and when you remember that, you can start acting as if, all right, so Twitter is gonna be a place where ... You have to remember, their behavior is different. Twitter is not Facebook. Facebook is not Instagram. Instagram is not, say, like Snapchat, and it's not Pinterest. They all have a different sort of level of behavior with the people in these things.

Another big problem and a reason why social media doesn't work for authors is because they're treating all of the platforms the same. All right, what is Twitter good for? It is absolutely the worst place to try to sell books. This has been proven over, and over, and over, and over again 'cause people really don't leave. They just sort of retweet and engage with different things. You could look at what's going on in the world right now and pretty much everyone would be like, "Oh, yeah, it's Twitter." Everybody's blowing up and retweeting, but very few people are actually doing things about it. That's why what Twitter is good for is connecting one-on-one with many influencers in your market. It is vastly easier to make a big list.

This is what I would recommend doing, making a big hit list of all of the big names that you would like to somehow work with. Put them in a spreadsheet with their Twitter handles and all that stuff, and then go find them, and follow them, and start engaging with their content because what happens after a while is that they notice you noticed. What happens after that is they start talking to you. It literally will open up this conversation with them where ... And not everyone, obviously. Some people have their assistants running it and their assistants aren't paying attention, but don't worry about that. You'll get enough of them if you do this consistently where you'll just literally sort of develop this online friendship, and from those friendships can come some amazing business partnerships where they might even end up promoting you and you don't even ask them to. Next thing you know, your sales blow up, and your following grows, and it kind of changes your life a little bit. It's kind of like getting a book bought a lot of times, and so that's how you leverage Twitter.

All right, now let's talk about Facebook. Facebook is amazing when you're building your email newsletter list thing. If you saw my webinar that I did the other week, 'cause literally, I went through the entire program how you gamify it, how you capture, you connect, you convert. Every single piece of it is to stabilize, optimize, expand, show the ads. This is what you do. This is how you bid. This is why it's not working for most people because they're not bidding on the right ads and it completely went into epic ridiculous detail about this whole thing. If you want to see that, you can go to [Facebook.com/AuthorPlatformRocket](https://www.facebook.com/AuthorPlatformRocket), and then click on the videos tab. It's gonna be the super big video webinar that I live-streamed right through the platform. I was using Zoom and that.

Now, my point here, what I was talking about on that webinar in clearly more detail than we can cover on a very short podcast is that there is a process behind how to use social media. The first piece is that capture. That's where you're going to want to get their name and email address. I talk about

gamification, how you turn it into a fun experience for them, and obviously our service is the giveaway and things like that because it really works and it's like the perfect kickoff kind of thing, but now you have a name and an email address. Then on the thank you page, they're able to follow you on various social media platforms for more points and what not.

Now the reason you want to do this is because of part two, and that is connect. This is where you run non-salesy kind of stuff. What's amazing about this is you can set up an audience inside a Facebook that says, "Anybody who is fired the lead pixel event," what that means is somebody who is subscribed to your newsletter recently, obviously, 'cause you probably don't have ... If you're like most authors, you don't have the pixel set up yet. But when you do it this way, you can set up that pixel, and it just sits there, and it just builds this audience of people and for \$1 a day, usually less, you can run some fun content videos directly to them and be like, "Hey, thank you so much for joining on my giveaway. I wanted to make sure that you got your free copy of," whatever it is you're giving them, like that everybody wins prize.

"And I just wanted to say, you know what? Thank you so much. If you have any questions at all or if you want to reach out to me, you just click the link up there and like or follow my page, or you could message me directly." Boom. Done. That's it. That's all you have to do. Here's the big thing. The whole point around this is that there are so many millions of books now on these virtual shelves that every single author has to do something different to stand out. The beautiful part about this is, there's lots of folks that listen to this show, but probably 1% of them or less who actually implement this stuff. If you happen to be part of that 1%, good-oh, good on ya, but think about that. You show up in front of people now in social media who are following you who have taken the action that you want, and you can just deliver a nice little conversation. You want to do something like this once a week.

I previously recommended that you come up with some fun thing, like if it was me, here's what I would do. I would reach out into the world, probably hit the newsletter, and also post it to social media, and then boost it just to the fans and say, "Hey, listen. Every Wednesday," and I'm just making this up as I go. "Every Wednesday, we're going to do a dinner together. I want to know what you're cooking and maybe I'll cook that, too. If I pick your recipe, you win an autographed copy of my book." See? We've just connected. There's gonna be a certain percentage of people that really take you up on that. Now, I know you're busy. That's why I'm like do it once a week, but do it consistently.

What you're gonna end up finding is that as you start launching new books, you can start really getting in front of these folks in a cool non-salesy kind of way. This will set you so far apart from all of the other authors 'cause almost nobody does this. That's the connect piece. Remember, capture, connect, and what ends up happening is over the course of time, they end up buying from you, regardless, like the step three, the convert. Convert into a sale, or a reader, or something like that. That tends to happen on its own, but the big problem is

that most authors go from capture and then try to convert. Now this connect piece can happen very quickly. I mean, maybe like one two three days in a lot of cases, especially if you're staying on top of them in a really cool way.

Maybe you'll even have a video that follows them around after that says, "Hey, hoping that you really enjoyed the book. I'd love to hear about what you thought. Why don't you leave a comment right below?" The reason I'm saying to use video is because this is what's working right now inside of Facebook, maybe not in three years. I mean, we have a limited window of opportunity here. We can get as much reach as any major news outlet, and we're just normal people, and so you would be remiss in your duties as an author who is trying to make it or making it, wants to get bigger, if you did not reach into the pot and also do some videos.

This is why social media is not working, because it hasn't been blended as a coherent strategy. You can use your email to then connect with people inside of social media and stand apart because think about this. These folks are getting emails from probably hundreds of authors if they haven't purged their inbox yet. Most of these authors look the same. Everybody's sending the same kind of crappy email templates that are just ridiculous. Do something different. That's why social media doesn't work. While it was kind of like, yeah, this is a great article, but it doesn't take into account anybody having any planning. It takes into account like, oh, I posted in Twitter and I didn't sell books. Well, of course not 'cause you don't. It was like, oh, I posted on Facebook and I didn't sell books. Of course not because you don't. You have to do it differently. It worked like that years, and years, and years ago when it was super new, and people would see all your posts, and things like that.

But, the problem that most authors have is they're taking this ancient, essentially, mindset and strategy book, and they're still using it today. Things have to change. Key word here is commoditization. That is where there are so many books and so many authors that have flooded into the market, since the Kindle launch, that readers are very confusing, especially with [inaudible 00:17:18] who are just trying to make it, how do they know you? If you're trying to break in the new fans, it doesn't even matter how big you are in your own circles. If you want to get new fans, which you absolutely should, that's a hard road to hoe, all right, unless you're following the process here.

Just a really quick aside on Pinterest, Pinterest ... If you want free traffic, I know I said don't rely on free traffic, which I actually don't. I keep promoted pins running because Pinterest, turns out, is our second biggest referral traffic source. Facebook is first. Pinterest is second then just random search shit. I shouldn't have said that. Sorry. I'm trying not to cuss on this thing, but I'm getting all ... Yeah, this is crazy. You can absolutely leverage Pinterest. You can leverage Facebook, but it's pay-to-play, all right? Keep that in mind, is this world we live in now is pay-to-play. I hope you understand you do not need to have a spectacularly large budget for this, but it is pay-to-play. All right?

Well, hopefully you found this somewhat helpful and it can give you a little bit of clarity on what might be broken inside of your marketing. If you did, awesome. Please share it with some folks who might like it and I will see you next week. I'm Jonny Andrews. This is Author Platform Rocket. Have a wonderful day.

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