REAL FAST RESULTS PODCAST

Episode 63

Using Persuasive Content to Pre-Sell Your Products & Services

Alice Seba

Welcome to this episode of the Real Fast Results podcast! Today's special guest is Alice Seba. She is a content marketing master. There are so many uses for content when you are building a business. Alice certainly has a long and very successful track record with this. In fact, she has sold millions of dollars worth of her content and has built a very large and substantial email list of clients and customers who not only seek her products, but also her services. They do so over and over again because her content is just that good.

Alice specializes in the power of persuasive writing and relationship marketing. This is a super-important aspect in every successful online business. She is excellent at creating loyalty among her customers and positive word of mouth for not only her business, but their businesses as well. Welcome to the show Alice…

Promise: How to Use Content to Educate Customers

What I'd really like to get into today is talking about that power of content, and also, the persuasiveness of it. **I want to teach people how they can use content to educate their potential customers and get them eager to buy their products.** Often, we think of content as being a separate thing, as a lead generator, or

as a way to get people on our list or to visit our blog, but it is an amazing selling tool. I would like to show you how to use it as such.

Well, the thing about educating your audience, and providing good content, and also getting them to buy... It has a lot of benefits. Obviously, there's the sales that come to begin with, but also, it creates that good will with your audience, so they are more likely to spread the word about you, and more likely to spread content that actually has a sales message in it. **People will spread a blog post, and they won't mind sharing something that has a promotional element to it, if it's highly informative as well.**

When you do create this base of content, it's something that's long-lasting. You know, something that you can use over and over again. You can re-purpose it for other things. I mean, think about it. When you've got a sales page, and it's just selling something, that serves that purpose, but there's not much else that you can do with it. **When you have different types of content, you can draw in a bunch of traffic and get them in a lot of different ways.** You can reuse that content and re-purpose it in various formats and keep getting it out there. So, it's work that you do once, but you can use it over and over.

Content can drive traffic, educate, and increase sales. They know if they need the product, and some people won't. That's okay because, even if they don't buy this time, now they have trusted your advice. Now, when they need a product, they know that they can believe what you say. They will know that they need it, they will know, maybe, how to use it. They will be able to see results that other people have gotten so that they can imagine that for themselves.

Webinars

The cool thing about webinars is that through the great content that you provide, you actually earn the right to make an offer. For me, I'm much more of a writer type, so webinars are actually intimidating to me. However, this can be used for anything, whether you're writing content, writing emails, doing blog posts, videos, audios, whatever. But, yeah, it's a very similar concept.

Content Marketing - A Different Look

I think the first step is to change the way that you look at the idea of your content marketing. Like I mentioned, a lot of people think of it as something separate from selling. So, you might think, "Okay, I've got to do so many blog posts in a week. I've got to post to Facebook. I've got to do stuff for Twitter. I've got to send a newsletter," and you don't really bring all those things together. **I always encourage people to plan their content ahead of time and their product promotions at the same time.**

Let's say that you're going to release a product. You want all of your social media, your blogging, and your emails to be related. Don't look at those things separately. Or, even if you were going to promote a product as an affiliate. Again, mesh all of that in so your audience is… You build up that excitement. Also, because you're getting them interested in the topic. Always plan it that way. Never think of it as a separate thing.

I know people will plan their blog posts, or they don't plan their blog posts and they sit in front of the computer, thinking, "I know I've got to write something, but I don't know what to write about." **But, if you plan what you're going to sell, it makes it much easier to shape the content around that.** I think, once you know what you're going to release… What products you're going to release, and/or what products you're going to promote… Think about the questions that your audience would have, not just about that product, but if it's an information product, about that subject area.

Think about all of the questions that they might have, things that they'll want to know, and start working on answering those. These can be done in, like, product reviews. So, if it's an affiliate product that you're doing, review it and compare it to other products. Teach them how to use the product. Like, demonstrations. It could be videos, it could just be written content. It doesn't matter. Gather case studies where you can. If you are using the products, share the results and the benefits you've got, and give them little bits and pieces, or little tips. So, if it's your information product or your book, give them snippets and things, meaningful things that will help them.

Let's say that they were going to buy an information product, we'd provide a little checklist, or a little template, or something that gives them a little slice of what's in there. If they get the full product, they've seen that the checklist or template is excellent content, so they feel more confident that they can go and buy from there and get more.

The Art of Copywriting

The only other thing that I wanted to mention was one step, and I don't think we can really dig into it in this interview, but I'd really like to encourage people to learn the art of copywriting, if they haven't already. I could give a guide that you can download. It shows you how to combine those persuasive elements. **Like, when we think of copywriting, we are thinking of the heavy pitch and things like that, but when you can learn how to apply those copywriting concepts to content, it's much more powerful.**

All the content that we create is persuasive, and it needs to be persuasive. It doesn't matter if it's a blog post or whatnot because you want people to stick around and read, or listen, or whatever it happens to be. You want to be sure that they don't walk away. **So, headlines are important, or you might want to convince them of your argument.** It's all persuasive writing, so the more you can learn about copy writing, and how it applies to content, that's really important to do. At first, it may seem

unnatural, but the more that you do it, and the more that you practice, the easier it becomes.

Planning Ahead

Planning ahead, sometimes, is overwhelming for us as solo entrepreneurs. We're, sort of, flying by the seat of our pants, but it's amazing how much easier that gets. The first of the month before the next month is when I'm doing all of the planning and I know what's going to happen. That's the concrete planning; I know exactly what's going to happen on which dates. I know what content I'll have to have created and what I'll need to create. Taking that half hour or something. **Overall, it saves me so much time, and helps me to make sure that my marketing is much more solid and everything is a cohesive unit.**

Creating Content That's Educational and Leads to Purchases

It's hard to give a blanket answer when it comes to this. It really varies because it will depend on your audience, and it will depend on what you are promoting. It's kind of got to be what lends itself to promoting that product. For example, we have a list of writers. They are authors, and they are service providers. They are people who are trying to make a living from their writing in a variety of different ways. Through working with them, I have kind of learned that they don't like videos, for instance.

If we give them a video, or ask them to attend something live, they don't really respond, with the exception of The Best Sellers Summit. They love that for some reason. But, if it's a regular promotion, like we put in a link to a video or something like that, this doesn't interest them as much as if we got together for a webinar, and after the webinar, the presenter actually puts together notes, or will allow them to have some notes or something to download. They eat that up, and it ends up leading to sales that way because they want to sit down and read. So, it really is a matter of testing in that regard, and I think it really depends on the specific product that you are promoting.

I think the important thing is to experiment and see what happens. If you think about those questions that you think your audience is going to have, and another way to find out what kind of content to use, is to not just think about those questions, but ask those questions. Before we release a product, we typically say, "Hey, we are going to be putting this together, and we are just wondering what questions you have on the subject and what you'd like us to figure out." As we are getting ready to launch it, even if it's a product that we create live, before we launch it, we'll start answering some of those questions by email or whatever it happens to be.

Just pay attention and track everything. Track the links to see what topics most interest them and also what results in sales as well. You don't just track what they are

clicking through to read because that doesn't always mean that they are buying it. So, we're considering our audience and their preferences, and we use that in conjunction with their behavior. If we put something out there, and it flops, then we know not to use that type of content so much anymore.

Remember that asking your customers straight out what to put in your product is a good way to know what to create, but it also starts that conversation. They are already interested in the product because you've asked for their feedback. It's just that the act of asking them is sort of a pre-selling tool. Plus, the customers that you have asked feel invested in the creation of that product. In other words, they feel like they have helped to create it, so that makes them want to buy it even more.

Case Studies

It's a good idea to try to work up some kind of case study. **The more you know your product, the better.** First of all, you'll be able to sell it better because you know, but then you're also sharing that valuable content that shows them how to use it. I think you should start by asking questions of your audience and engaging them that way, and maybe making them feel involved with the process. Interviewing the product creator is another great idea, and even if you're not sitting down for a video interview, you might ask your audience what questions they would like to ask them. Then, through written email, you can answer a question with a single email, or a single blog post, or whatever it happens to be.

I do find that having something downloadable, or something that they can put in their virtual hands, they love that. It really has a higher perceived value than something that they just go and read on a blog or something like that. There are so many things that you can do. It could be a report. It could be a checklist. It could be a fill-in-the-blank sheet. It could be audio. You can also have patterns, or a shopping list, or something like that, say, if you're teaching… anything. Then, they feel like you're already delivering tons of value. In many cases, they are already thinking about purchasing a downloadable product, but you're giving them bits and pieces here and there.

For some reason, when you let people know in the subject line of an email that there's something to download, it typically doubles the click-through rate. I've heard this works for PDFs and video content. Now, I don't find this is true for my list, but in many cases, just putting the word "PDF" or "Video" in the subject line will drive up the response you get. You never know how your audience is going to react to certain things like that, but if you can find that hot thing that they like and seems to be valuable to them, it can really help your marketing.

One thing that I want to mention, too, is that with the delivery of this content, you're going to want to make sure that you are still giving that pitch. Like, you're not hoping that this content is so good that they are going to go get

it. So, if I have a PDF that they download, it probably mentions the product at the beginning, and then at the end it probably has a really heavy, but informative, pitch. It's the same with the emails.

For example, we sell these done-for-you marketing templates. People can fill in the blanks, they get checklists, and all kinds of things like that. And, we have checklists on a variety of topics, like for Kindle publishing or selling on a webinar. So, we did a series of tips that whole week, where we gave them Kindle tips that they could take and run with, whether or not they purchased our templates. Then, we would tell them in that same email, and even in the tips that we gave them, we'd mention our template package. For instance, in our tips for the bio, we'd mention that our template package actually has a fill in the blank bio that you can work with.

At the end, we'll still say, "This is where you can go to get the templates." You might give them a time-limited offer, a coupon code, or something, but it's all there. The pitch is very obvious, but the content is still so good that even if they don't go ahead and use it, they are able to put that into practice.

A lot of people, if they are just starting out and they don't have much of a list, they may think, "Well, this seems like a lot of effort and work," but it's that content that's going to grow that list. So, if you're getting these PDFs that you're going to send to your list, you can also set that up as an opt-in form and use this to drive people in. The more stuff that you have, really the better... Like, most people will set up a website and have their little opt-in box in the corner, and that's their one free offer, but almost every piece of content that you create can be some way to get people into your list.

Email Lists

Email is my favorite thing. You can have a social media following, but that's not really your list. That's Facebook's list, or whatever it is, and it's also... It's social. I mean, you can sell stuff there, but email is the most beautiful thing because people expect to get a sales pitch. They aren't offended by it or surprised. Well, maybe some people are, but I wouldn't worry about those people. It's a very commercial medium, and it's also so direct. **Your emails go right into their inbox.**

A lot of this involves practicing and providing your audience with what they really want. You should track everything, and if you are doing email, for example, like if you are using [Aweber](#) or a different auto-responder, they will track stuff for you automatically, so pay attention to that and grow from there. You're going to learn what your unique audience wants.

That's the beauty of this online thing too. We can grow the audience we want. I'm not actually surprised that my lists don't like video because I don't really care for video either. So, I think I've conditioned people and attracted those people that like the kind of content I share. That's the wonderful thing about it. We do have to take the time to learn. We can't just assume that they want the same kinds of content we want. There

are so many ways to do that. Engage them in conversation, ask them questions, and track what they do.

Connecting with Alice

The best place is my "About Me" page at AliceSeba.com. You can usually see what I'm up to, and it's a great way to find me. I also wanted to let people know that I do the Best Sellers Summit with Ron Douglas. This is the second annual one that we have held. Basically, what we do is teach writers, and authors, and anybody who wants to sell more books or information products how to bring what they have up to that bestseller status. We teach, not only the publishing part, but also the marketing and how to really get your stuff out there. You can check this out on DanielHallPresents.com/BestSum.

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