

Daniel Hall Presents



Episode 105

Using the Power of Personalized Email to Connect with Your Audience

with **Scott Dubois**

Welcome to this episode of the RealFastResults.com podcast! Today's show is a very special one. Of course, all of these shows are special. This episode is going to be especially good for those of you who know that you need more in the way of marketing your business, books, products, etc. **If you are struggling in your marketing efforts, or if you would just like to improve your business in this way, this is a terrific show for you to pay attention to.**

Scott Dubois will be sharing his knowledge with us throughout this episode. He is a principal at [Pidalia](#), which is a digital agency that provides folks just like you solutions to their challenges in areas such as advertising, software design, business process management, and so forth. Scott has an extensive background in information technology systems, which of course is very useful for anyone to have expertise in nowadays. He also specializes in media selection and campaign strategy as well as analytics. Plus, he applies his knowledge of business processes to help his clients improve their relationships with their existing audiences. Please welcome Scott to the show...

Promise: The Power and Value of Personalized Media

Thank you so much for having me. It's a pleasure to be with you. The big thing that we're going to take away from today's episode is the power and the value of personalized media, and the how

and why this works for your audience in today's space. **And, more importantly, why you need to do it in order to stand out from the crowd.** We all know the statistics, right? It's something like 3,200 marketing messages a day, and we are aware of 40 and can remember three. Those stats are always changing, but that's pretty darn close. So, that's what we're looking to cover and talk about today.

I'm Just an Author. Why Should I Care?

It's very interesting that you bring up authors as an example. I see, many times, folks that are taking books, and they will write a book on a topic, and it will be intended for a particular audience, and they will then go out and make a series of it. We've seen it with the big name authors, right? With Jay Baer, right? Where he's now gone out and spun some versions of his books into, you know, audience specifics, and I see it with authors all of the time.

That's great because, often times, those ideas are really big ideas. **These authors have great, world-changing ideas, and they are adapting them for marketplaces, specifically on how they can help them.** That's great for getting the ideas on paper. Now let's talk about how you go ahead and market that.

There's a whole specialized way to make sure that you are marketing that so that you have your brand as an author as a whole, and then individually you're going to want to personalize those things. What I see often is that authors are actually doing it themselves, within the execution of what they are actually publishing. You need to make sure that the marketing mirrors what's going on with the execution.

Overview

The good news is that it doesn't have to look exactly like how we are going to lay this down right now. There are many ways by which this problem can be tackled. Everything that we talk about today is one example. **Some media channels may not be appropriate for some authors and publishers, but let's get into some real, tactical ways that this can be done.**

So, as authors, one of the most valuable things that we have is an email list. Right? Authors talk about that all of the time. But, what I would do is challenge your audience. Within that email list, within that master list, I like to tell people that it doesn't matter if you have 1,000, 10,000, or 1,000,000 folks because it's not so much about the number of people on your list. It's about horizontal database strategy.

What I mean by, "horizontal database strategy," is what you know about those people. So it's not just how many, it's how many of your books have they bought? How long have they been subscribed to your list? Do you know which industry they are in? Okay? So, the first thing that I want folks to think about is the horizontal growth of their existing email database. If you have that today, great! Tuck it into your back pocket because we are going to get to that in a few minutes. If you don't have that today, really think about horizontal growth.

We love to get jazzed because, “Hey, I’ve gone from 10,000 to 12,000 subscribers.” But, often times, what you’ll find is that the thing that moves the needle for more engagement, more click-throughs, and more conversions is what you know about the person, not how many people. So, first I want you to think about that.

If I’m an author, I’m going to think about my database. My email marketing database as a horizontal strategy. So it’s not just the name. It’s going to be, “How long have they been a subscriber? Do they know how many books you have published? Have they ever done a bulk order? Have you ever met them in person?” These are all key indicators that we might be able to use for personalized media.

I’ll give you another example, and we’re going to go a bit deeper now. That’s one tactical approach. Let’s go deeper on that. One of the things that I just mentioned was, “Do you know (or have you met) this person?” Like, have you went to a conference and actually met this person? That’s because experience tells us that you can convert folks that you’ve met in person much better than folks you haven’t met in person.

I challenge you, the audience, to craft personal messages to these people. When you have a new book, a new edition, or a new release coming out, email out specifically to those people that you’ve met in person, with a personalized mask for how they can help you. You have that relationship already, so let them know they can help you immensely by buying it and sharing it with a friend.

That’s one example of how you can use that data trigger, horizontal (not how many) and outbound, to increase conversions and sales. So, that’s one tactical area that I invite folks to start thinking about. It’s just that simple thing in email marketing where thinking about it from the other direction can make a big impact.

Steps 1 & 2 - Think about Your List Horizontally - Implement

Now, Step 1 is to start thinking about your list horizontally. Step 2 is to start implementing. We’re going to talk about this on two levels. Again, what I’d like to do is set out what this can be in the big picture. If you start out by only doing a few of these and eventually catch up, that’s great. So, what I’m saying here, this can all be plug and play, meaning that you can use some segments and not other segments.

First level is to think horizontal. Now that you are, I challenge you to create three versions of your newsletter instead of just having one going out. But, keep it simple. I can’t tell you exactly what three versions of your newsletter would look like, so let’s use some examples. If I’m an author, one of the versions that I might create would be if I happen to know that there’s no known sales, but I know that there’s interest. Like, if someone hit my website or went through a referral link, but there’s no known relationship, those people should get one version of your weekly or monthly newsletter. That way, you can establish a relationship.

The second version might go out to folks who have a social media profile that you know of. I don't care if it's LinkedIn, or Twitter, or Facebook, or Instagram. It should be folks that you have a social connection to, and in your database, one of the things you may be capturing, other than their name and email address, is their social handles. You should craft a list specifically for these people because since you have existing social engagement, you can actually activate socially in that better. Let them help you with advertising.

Instead of just adding social link along the top or the bottom of your messages, embed a bold call to action within your emails. If you have a known social relationship, why not use that to your advantage? That would be the second version of your email newsletter that I'd create. Then, your third version would be everyone else, and that's going to resemble the most what you're doing today.

You may have heard about data segmentation before, and you might be wondering how that applies. Well, chances are that if you're an author, especially a self-published author, you don't have an army of a marketing team who is going to do this for you. You need something that's tangible and that you can bite off. So, I'm not saying to create 100 versions. Let's make it three, but three versions that actually work for you.

Now, that's Level One. Level Two is, if you are doing any paid advertising, create mirrored segments that match those three versions as well. Select your audience, for instance, if you're doing a Facebook group. You use what's called a "saved audience," and match that to the audience that you've created there. So, now you're matching up your paid social efforts with your existing email newsletter, and that's how you can start to take personalization full circle to work for you. Obviously, this presupposes that you have an email list in the first place, and I hope that you do. If you are an author, email is probably one of the most important things that you have going for you.

Email Marketing Tools for Authors

Any of the major providers will do (Constant Contact, Campaign Monitor, Emma). Let's keep using the same example. If I'm an author, there's only two I'm thinking about. **It's either [Emma](#) or [Constant Contact](#).** It's probably going to be Emma. They are both great. I can't really say a bad thing about either one, and they both have the ability to work with the type of horizontal data that we're talking about.

It's going to be really easy and intuitive, so if you're not a data expert, you can actually still get it done. That's the good news. So, either of those two. Those are the two big names in the space, and either of those two will get it done for you.

Step 3 - Closing the Loop

The next thing, and really the final part before you start to just talk about extrapolating and making it bigger and better, carrying what we've talked about with email and now expanding it

into your marketing efforts... The third step closing the loop. You've done it once. You've started to think horizontally, and you've used the data. **However, you need to make sure that you are closing the loop so that as you have more sales, and as you're getting to know folks, you can have that new data fall on in.**

Think about landing pages. We've said that in 2017, if you're an author, you need to have an email list. The other thing is that you probably have landing pages. Plural. Several, right? That's just a fact of life. Are they optimized to collect the data that you need? And, I'm not talking about the entries on the form. You don't have to be a super-tech expert, but you can actually collect the referral. Where did that come from? Did that come from a social connection? Did that come from a link somewhere else on the Web? Start to actually collect the referral, or how someone ended up on the page.

Did they click through from an email? Did they click through from an email that was forwarded? That's another interesting one, right? Actually collect the referral, and that could be a data point as you think horizontally. So, Step #3 is "optimize everything". If it's social, you're collecting something on Facebook. Now they have the form, so you can bring those right back in. Maybe it's a landing page. Whatever it is, Step #3 and the final step to this is to go ahead and close that loop. When you append new data, have horizontal and you need to grow it, or update data that's existing.

If you have a profile of someone now, think, "Ooh, I knew John@Doe.com. He's in my database. That's one of those unknown groups," for instance, but, "Someone named John@Doe.com came through and now I have his Twitter account." Right? Because I've updated this form, and I've captured that. Now you're actually appending and thinking more horizontally about your existing data. So, think about everywhere you're collecting data and close the loop. That's the final step.

So, I Should Continue to Collect Data as Time Goes By?

Yeah, that's the more advanced step. I'm saying at the "101 Step," let's say you have a database, and you've started to collect other things. But, if you still have landing pages for a book that you published three years ago that is only collecting someone's name, address, and email address, that's probably not doing you as well. You need to update that form to collect all of the things that you've decided to start collecting. That's what I mean by "close the loop".

Now that you've taken a step forward with your master database, make sure that everywhere you're collecting information is doing that work for you. And, the more advanced stage is to take that to the next level. Think about how far you can push that horizontally.

What's the Point of All of This?

The underlying rationale behind this whole endeavor is to really get to know your customers, or your readers, better so that when you have a new work out, like a new book, or a new coaching program, or whatever you've got, you can use this additional intelligence to segment further, based on the new metrics that you are collecting. You'll be able to increase your conversions and sales as well, which is the whole reason we're doing this.

I'm Already Using Aweber. Is that Okay to Use?

Aweber will do a lot of this sort of thing as well, and so will iContact, 1ShoppingCart, Benchmark, and MailChimp. Each of these has data profiling built in, and you can actually build email templates to be triggers on databases. Every one of these data providers can do everything that I've covered today. It's becoming standard. What's not happening is, folks see it and they think, "Oh, that's cool, and I'd love to use it," but you can only use it if you have the data to power it. That's what I'm hoping to spur you to begin thinking about today. Have the data to power all of these tools which are likely already in your toolbelt. You need to use the tools that you're already paying for, or at least empower yourself to be able to. I hope that's a takeaway.

Final Tips

One additional thing I'd like to throw out, because I want to make all of this really tangible so you can act on it, let's say that you don't have any social contacts and you don't know about your previous purchasers. **I challenge you to ask, "What do I know?"** Even if that data is offline, or even if you have to collect it from a third party, just start adding something. When you have something that you know, it's better than guessing. One hundred percent of the time, when you have something that you know, it's better than guessing. That's even true if you can only make two versions of your newsletter, instead of the three we just talked about. Just find out, even if it's not a specific example. Just ask yourself, because every publisher does, "What do I know about this audience?" Then you can start to act on it.

Resources

[Emma](#)

[Constant Contact](#)

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