SPI Podcast Session # - 94
5 Proven Content Creation Tips to Help You Maximize the Impact of Your Information

show notes at: http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session94

This is The Smart Passive Income Podcast with Pat Flynn Session #94.

I got bronchitis and nobody got time for that!

Welcome to The Smart Passive Income Podcast where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host, whose arch nemesis is the loading bar, Pat Flynn!

Hey, what's up everyone? Pat Flynn here and it is great to be back again. I have really, really missed you. I've been out of commission for a couple of weeks battling viral bronchitis.

I actually did have bronchitis. And I was at New Media Expo in Vegas which I'll talk about in just a second, but when I got back, just the coughing, it has been nonstop. It has actually been very terrible. And finally after two weeks, I am able to have enough energy again to record and get some work done.

But that's the beauty of passive income. Like as I was out sick, my businesses continue to run, transactions continued to be made and the blog and the podcast have continued to provide content to people. I love that.

But like I said, I'm really happy to be back finally. I hope everyone else is doing OK. Apparently like twenty-five percent of the people who went to New Media Expo contracted the same virus, which is crazy. And it's funny. My friend, Erik Fisher, from Beyond the To-Do List, another great podcast on iTunes, he said, "We're all about things going viral but not like this." That's for sure.

But anyway, really quick just to give you an update. New Media Expo despite being sick on my way home and for a few weeks after, it was awesome. My presentation went very, very, well. I spoke on the first day and it was literally standing-room-only. And I even had a number of people sitting on the floor right up in front sort of like story time

at the library which was really cool. But yeah, the room was like way too small. Way too small for the crowd.

So I actually made a little complaint about that because they were turning people away from the presentation. That can't happen. I mean they stopped letting people in. I mean yes, it was a fire hazard and yeah, I get that. But I mean I was really angry because a lot of people came up to me afterwards and I felt like I had to apologize for the size of the room which shouldn't happen.

Well, long story short, I got upset. And by upset, I mean Pat Flynn upset like, "Oh, I'm very disappointed," or "Oh, I can't believe this happened." Well next year, they are giving me a larger room. They heard so many good things about my presentation from the people who did show up and did grab a seat that they awarded me the opening keynote for the entire event next year, which is awesome.

The opening – oh my gosh, I'm just so – like just saying that out loud is so crazy. I mean how awesome is that from four years ago being a nobody at this conference to now doing the opening keynote for NMX in 2015? I'm just – I can't even express how happy I am about that.

And for those of you who do go, I promise there will be enough seating for you. Just thank you to all of you for all the encouragement and the support to help me break out of my comfort zone and get on stage back in 2011. I mean I never would have thought it would lead to this or at least this soon. So just thank you.

Now, for those of you who weren't there, I did record my presentation so look out for a post about that on the blog very soon. I actually finally took matters into my hands as far as the recording is concerned. And I found a professional videographer to come and film the whole thing. And from what I've seen so far, it looks awesome and I can't wait to share that with you.

After New Media Expo and getting into a little bit of what we're going to talk about today, I've had a lot of people from all levels of online business experience asked me, "Pat, how do you prepare? How do you structure your presentations? How do you know what to include in them."

And I know I talked about this a little bit in a previous podcast episode which was all about public speaking but I wanted to expound on it here today because the approach you take and the structuring of any piece of content that you create is extremely

important not just presentations that are done live but any sort of content that you publish and share with the world, blog posts, podcasts episodes, videos, infographics, anything, taking a very purposeful approach to that piece of content that you're working on will help you get the most out of that information that's in your brain and it will help you make the most impact with it.

So today, I'm going to talk about how to approach the content that you create. And all of this comes out of my own experience as a content creator in all different mediums from blog posts to podcast episodes to videos, public speaking, and also as a consumer of each of those types of content as well. I'm going to give you five different – yes, five different content creation tips.

And by the end of this recording, I'm not exactly sure how long it's going to go because I'm not quite sure how long my voice will last with you today. But by the end of this episode, you'll be more confident as you create content, you'll create content faster and you'll do it in a way so that it has more impact. Your message will come across that much stronger and you'll be able to better keep the attention of those who are consuming that content too while they are consuming it.

We spend hours, sometimes over the course of multiple days creating a single piece of content. And yes, after it's published, that doesn't mean you're done. So please keep that in mind. You worked so hard on creating your content. You have to market that content after you press the publish button or upload that audio or upload that video to a server. But stepping back a bit, the marketing part of that piece of content starts even before you write, record, or film anything. And really, it starts with a transformation. That's tip number one.

So we're talking about five tips to help you with content creation. **This is tip number one and this is just a single word for you. Transformation.** It is probably my favorite word right now and one that was inspired by my speaking coach actually. His name is Mike P. This was back in 2012 because he asked me when we first started working together before I told him anything about what I had in my mind for what I wanted to present about, he said, "Pat, what's the transformation you want your audience to go through while listening to you speak?

How do people come into the room and how will they leave different? What does that transformation look like? Once we know, we can then figure out how to make that transformation happen."

And I just love that. I just so love that approach to all kinds of content that we create in general. I mean really, it's just a fancy way of saying, "Well, what's the purpose of your content?" But I love the sort of angle of, "What the audience's transformation?" It's so much better because it puts the focus on them, the audience. Not you, not the money, not the traffic, or any of the other by-products of having great content. It's great content for the purpose of changing your audience in one way, shape or form. And when you can do that, when you can transform your audience, that's when traffic happens. That's when earnings come into play.

If you give your audience opportunities to pay you back of course. It's how you create raving fans. What's the transformation? It's such a great word. I want you to use it every time you create a piece of content.

So whenever I'm about to create a new piece of content to publish, I think about that question, "What's the transformation I want my audience to go through?" Take this podcast episode for example. I've already told you what that transformation is going to be. Just a minute ago, I said, "By the end of this recording, you'll be more confident as you create content.

You'll create content faster and with more impact and you'll be able to better keep the attention of those who are consuming that content too while they're consuming it." That's the transformation. And it's always smart to tell your audience what that transformation is. No matter what type of content you're creating.

There's a great quote by Dale Carnegie in one of my all-time favorite books, _Stand and Deliver_, which is a book mainly for those starting to get into the public speaking realm. But many things in this book apply across all content mediums. Like when he says, "This is how you structure a presentation. Three things: One, you tell them what you're going to tell them. Two, you tell them. And three, you tell them what you told them."

So that first part, "Tell them what you're going to tell them," that's extremely important even more so in online forms of content like blogs, podcasting, videos more so than a live setting because you have to hook your readers and listeners and viewers in right from the start. You only have a few moments to do that. And if you miss it, people are leaving. If people don't know that they're going to get something good after spending time with you, they can easily just leave that page and they're out. And more than likely, they're never going to come back.

In a live setting on the other hand, most people aren't going to just get up and leave in the middle of your presentation, at least not physically. Maybe mentally if it's not intriguing. But yeah, reveal the transformation for one. And two, do it sooner than later. So again, transformation, "What is it going to be?" If you don't know what that transformation is when you approach a piece of content then it's not time to start writing or recording anything yet.

It's not time to prepare a presentation because you haven't even thought about what you want your audience to go through after they consume it. So that's the first tip. Think about the transformation and be sure to tell your audience somewhere in the beginning of your content what that transformation will be.

Everyone including myself can do this much more. Even if you're doing interviews for a podcast, I mean you could still and you should be doing this. For example, if you're doing a podcast episode, you might want to say something like, "In this episode, you'll hear about how John Smith did this cool thing and that cool thing. And by the end of the interview, you're going to know exactly how to do x using only your y and z." See, I didn't even define anything there. I didn't define those variables. But already it sounds more compelling. Transformation. Remember that.

All right. **Tip number two, reverse engineer a transformation.** Tip number one was discover what that transformation is or determine what it is. Tip number two is reverse engineer the transformation. The transformation is sort of like the destination. It's what you type into your GPS so you know where you're going. And of course after you figured that out, you can then or your GPS then calculates the best route to get there. In other words, after you determine the transformation, you can figure out the supporting content you need in order to help your audience experience that transformation.

Now, the supporting content, before you even begin thinking about what that supporting content is, you should first, the very first thing you should do is write down all of the possible objections to that transformation. Think about the most doubtful person in the world who will consume this content in the future. What's on their mind? What makes them say, "No, that's not going to work." or, "Please, come on. Are you serious?"

What's going to make them say that? Write down all of those objections because that will help you determine what that supporting content will be. It will help you figure out what language to use and what points to address and of course, it will help you write

better content that will address those specific objections in the first place. It will get you to think about your content in a way that it needs to be thought about.

How many of you think about the objections to your articles while you're writing them? Probably not very many of you but you should because even though people may not verbally object to the content that you're creating, more than likely, they are thinking about those objections. They are having doubts in their head about what you're writing or what you're saying. So you best think about that now instead of after you hit the publish button or while you're speaking.

For example, my presentation from New Media Expo in 2013, this was two NMXs ago. That was titled [Proven Methods to Use Free in Your Business to Get More Traffic, More Subscribers and More Customers](). I wanted people to leave that room being excited about implementing some sort of free in their business based on the various examples that I was going to share. And there were some very, very clear objections that I thought about before even starting to create this presentation.

These are objections that I talked about. Here's a few: I can't afford to use free because I need to make money as soon as possible. That's one. I work so hard in this, why would I give it away for free? Aren't I devaluing my work by giving something away for free? I don't have a big enough audience for free to work with me. I've tried free and it didn't work. Isn't it manipulative to give something away for free as a means to make more money? I've been told to charge from day one. And OK, free works, I get it. But how do I know what will work for me?

I mean these are incredible, huge objections to exactly what I was creating a presentation about. So it made complete sense for me to think about them first because it helped me shape my presentation. It also shows when I'm addressing these things in my presentation or in my content that I'm actually looking at something from all sides and if I can support my content and address these things, it makes the content more believable and it positions me as more of an expert. Some of these objections will turn directly into sections of supporting content.

And this bleeds over to my next tip, **tip number three for you which is you have to understand that great content is broken up into different sections of supporting content.** So I guess you could say, subdivide the route. If you want to go back to the GPS example like we talked about earlier, you typed in your destination and it's all calculated for you. How is that route presented to you? Usually, it's in a list of

steps because there are different parts of that route to take. You take by I-5 South, you head west on 52, you exit La Jolla Village Drive, and the destination is on the left, right?

Much like that list of roads, you have to understand that in order to transform your audience, you have to guide your audience there by subdividing your content so it's easy to follow. I mean you could hypothetically just write one long essay with no subsections like we did back in school when we wrote paper. Heck, you could even have one large paragraph.

The same words that you would if you would if you subdivided them but just one large paragraph. No different paragraphs, no spaces or anything. But if someone blinks, they're lost, right? They have to start over to get to where they were. I mean it's hard to find your place.

When you subdivide your content, you're making it easier to digest, much easier to consume. And not only that, you're making it easier to remember. It's exactly like that roadmap with different turns. So what does this look like or how does it feel? Well, in a blog post, that means having different sections that people can see when they scroll down, not just different paragraphs but actual divided sections with titles, subtitles, sub headers to different sections of your blog post.

Each section is a different supporting point perhaps a start of a new supporting story or new case study or new research that you're talking about. And we'll get into those types of supporting content in just a second in our next tip but let's go to a podcast episode.

In a podcast episode, if you're doing interviews, it's fairly easy to sort of subdivide that content because different questions you ask give off that feeling that it's a new section. But if you're doing a solo show, break it down into different steps or tips just like I'm doing in this episode here.

And in a podcast episode especially since people are listening for longer periods of time, if you do breakdown your episode which you should, since it's not scrollable like on a blog post, you should repeat those stages or steps or tips several times along the way to help your listener remember where they are to help them keep their place as they're going along. You should also do this in live presentations as well.

So like I can just go, "Hey, tip number one remember, determine the transformation. Tip number two, reverse engineer the transformation and think about the objections.

Write them all down. Tip number three, subdivide the route. Create sections of supporting content for that transformation."

In a live presentation or on video, it works the same way. And of course, you can use slides or something on the screen to help sort of give off the idea of that new section to support the idea of that new section, text on the screen to highlight a new section or a new slide.

Now, one question I often get in regards to these subsections within blog posts and podcast episodes and presentations is, "Well, how many supporting ideas are necessary? Two? Ten? Twenty? Five? Twenty-five? What's a good number?" Well, my answer to any question that has to do with, "How many this or how many that should I have? How many pages should my eBook be? How many modules should my course be?" my answer is always the same. It should always be enough in order for you to get your point across.

Now, I don't really like saying a book should be a certain number of pages for example because then all of a sudden you're working too hard to write more pages than you might need to or you start deleting pages just to get to that count. How many supporting points should you have? Well, there's really all that you need. That's it. No more, no less.

But of course, I know you like numbers. And so, if you had to choose a number like if it was a life and death situation and you had to choose a number, a great number to go with is always three. Three is a good rule of thumb for most things dealing with creating supporting content. So if you're struggling a little bit, what is that transformation? Write down all the objections and then give yourself three sections to support it. Within each of those sections, you can go even further and you could have three supporting stories for each of those sections for example. Three is always a good rule of thumb. But again, don't limit it to three just because I said so. Do what you need to do.

In my most recent presentation at New Media Expo, which was How to Turn Your Casual Readers Into Raving Fans, it was broken down into three sections actually. The first section was talking about how to turn your casual audience into an active audience. That is, people who sort of just randomly stumble upon your site or your content to people who actually subscribe, people who actually premeditatively consume your content. They know you're there. They know the type of content that you have

and they choose to read it the next time you publish something. So that's the first section.

The second section was turning your active audience into a connected community. So now, not only are you as the sort of owner of the brand or blog sharing information and giving information to your audience, your audience is giving information back to you and talking to you and also, talking to each other. So that was the second section.

And the third section was to how to turn members of your connected community into raving fans.

And the last thing I want to mention about subdividing your content is this, if there is any way to visually represent that subdivision of your content, do it. Do it. It helps put the whole thing together. It creates a more memorable experience for your audience. And if you need to memorize the presentation if you're doing a presentation, it just makes it way easier for you to do that because you have this visual representation of what you're sharing.

So for example, I had a presentation that I did three years ago at BlogWorld Expo. I think it was BlogWorld Expo at the time, which turned into New Media Expo. Anyway, I'm probably confusing you right now. But I had this presentation. It was titled, Affiliate Marketing the Smart Way where I created something, a visual called The Soft-Pitch Pipeline which was a series, literally a visual series of pipes that represented the customer experience from the moment somebody lands on your site to the moment you pitch them something. But the first pipe, the first part of that journey being a really big long pipe and then it gets smaller and smaller along the way.

So of course, this particular example is hard to share on a podcast but there will be a link in the show notes, SmartPassiveIncome.com/session94 to exactly what this pipeline looks like. I actually had a graphic designer create this for me. The first part which is the biggest pipe is the relationship you have with your audience. The better the relationship you have with your audience, the bigger that pipe is.

The smaller your pitch pipe is at the end, the less you have to pitch. Better relationship, bigger relationship, smaller pitch, less aggressive pitch. And those other things in between like proof or the products that you share with your audience and the experience that you have with those products. It all goes in this little pipeline.

And it was something that a lot of people remembered after watching that presentation. They were like, "Oh cool, Soft-Pitch Pipeline. I get it." And they could visualize it. They could draw it out. And it helped me as the presenter memorize the different sections of the presentation. And from a public speaking point of view, it also showed the progress of the presentation which is always nice to do as well.

The audience can sort of understand where in the presentation they're at at any time depending on what sort of pipe they were in or what section of this visual representation that they see that they're in. And that's great for presentations. It's great for webinars, anything where you're talking probably for more than 20 minutes. It's good to have some sort of broken down visual representation where people can see sort of where they're at during – or where they're at in the progress or process of that presentation.

Another visual example that I have for you comes from my latest presentation at New Media Expo, the raving fans one. And it's something I created called the Affinity Pyramid. It's a pyramid that actually represents your entire user base, everybody who's come across your site. And within your user base, there are different levels of affinity or likings to your brand, levels of consumption of your brand if you will. At the base, at the bottom, you have your casual audience. This is the largest portion. And going up one level, you have your active audience. Above that, your connected community. And then finally at the top, at the tip, the apex of the pyramid are your raving fans.

So throughout the presentation, I share this pyramid and the parts of the pyramid I was talking about. Casual to active, that was one section. Active to community, the middle part, that's the second section. Community to raving fan, the top part, that's the last section.

And it also helped me prove my point and support that transformation I wanted people to have while watching this presentation which was, most people focused on selling to the casual audience. And that makes sense because it's the biggest part of pyramid. There are more people there. But we should instead focus on getting people who are in this pyramid to the very top, to become raving fans. That's the top part of your pyramid. That's the twenty percent of your audience. That gives you eighty percent of your results.

So instead of getting more people into this pyramid and selling to the casual audience, my sort of thesis here was, "Hey, let's just get people who are in your pyramid to the very top and then your pyramid will expand anyway."

So anyway, what's the point of all this? Supporting content, check. If possible, create a visual element to represent that content. It won't always be possible. But if it is, create it and name it, the Soft-Pitch Pipeline, the Affinity Pyramid. I totally made those things up. And that's OK. When you make up stuff like that, it becomes real. And when you make it up, it becomes yours.

All right. Moving on. **Tip number four here for creating content, we're going to talk about the types of supporting content.** So let's get into three – actually, three types. Here I go again with the three-thing. Three types of supporting content for your transformation, these are my favorite types of content to include in any presentation, blog post, podcast episode. They just work really well. And most of the content I create falls into one of these three categories although there's a lot more. But most of them fall into these three categories.

The first one is story. Now, I've written extensively on the power of stories and how they can just draw an audience in and especially when you're talking about transformation. I mean transformations are shared through story most of the time anyway. So you should be sharing stories whenever you can. And what I love about stories is that I often find myself going back to the same stories over and over again when I start talking about the same topics I've talked about in presentations before.

Like whenever I talk about proof, sometimes it's during a Q&A or sometimes it's just in a casual conversation at an event, I always bring up the same story that I've included in my presentations before because they're just easy to remember. You don't need to remember them word for word. They just – you're telling a story like you would tell a friend. And I always bring up the story of when I watched a documentary called *Fat Sick & Nearly Dead*. This is when I'm talking about the power of proof.

And this documentary is about a guy named Joe Cross who lost a ton of weight and became extremely healthy after going on a juicing diet because – and it was enough proof for me. I mean I watched that documentary. Twenty minutes later, I had a receipt in my inbox in my email from Amazon for a Breville Juicer like I was just totally convinced because there was proof in that documentary.

When I talk about why relationships are the most important thing in the world for your business and how the stronger the relationship you have, the less aggressive you have to be when trying to sell. I always tell the same story when my wife was pregnant and it was two in the morning and she'd asked me to go to the store and get a snickers bar.

No selling needed. We have that relationship with each other. She just tells me what to do and I do it. I'm not a wimp, maybe I am a little bit but more so, I care about her and probably even more so at that time. I didn't want to sleep next to an angry hungry pregnant woman.

So I always tell that same story and that always gets people laughing especially that last part. And it's just – it's in my story bank. This is something that I think is really important that we should all have. We should all have a bank of stories that we tell in certain situations or when certain things come up.

Ramit Sethi from I will Teach You to be Rich, he was on [episode 92](#) of the SPI podcast actually, very recently, I don't remember where he said this but it was such a genius idea. He just has these stories. And I think when he goes on interviews, on TV, and just does Q&A at conferences or just talks to people casually, he can pull out a story for a perfect situation and it just sounds beautiful because he said it many times before.

I think we should all have our story bank and it's something that you can't just be like, "Oh OK, I'm going to tell this story in this situation. I'm going to tell this story in this situation." It just sort of happens over time as you put yourself in situations to tell those stories in conversation with other people or at presentations. And most of the stories that I tell in this fashion that seem almost rehearsed if you will are stories that I've told in presentations and stories that I've told in my blog posts too.

So just write more stories, tell more stories, share more stories, and you're going to find yourself bringing yourself back to these stories the more you start to talk to other people. Anyway, I just sort of went off tangent there.

But anyway, in my most recent presentation at New Media Expo about creating raving fans, I actually made it mostly full of stories. Most of the entire presentation was just a bunch of different stories that supported this transformation and the idea of having or transforming your casual audience into raving fans.

And I talked about how my wife became a Backstreet Boys' fan. I also talked about my factory tour of the Scharffen Berger Chocolate Factory in Berkeley. And the point of that was opening up the doors of your business to the public much like what Smart Passive Income does that helps your audience feel more loyal to you and your brand. It helps them feel like they got something special that somebody normal or just regular casual audience member wouldn't get.

And again, these stories aren't necessary to prove the point. I mean I could simply say, "Oh, you should open up the curtain a little bit in your business and show your audience what happens behind the scenes." I could just say that. But because I told a story because I have a story to go along with it, it becomes more memorable and relatable. So keep that in mind. Whenever you have a chance to wrap your message in a story, do it. So that's content type number one. Story.

Content type number two is a case study. If you can share something that you did or something an audience member did that proves your point, that represents your supporting point or demonstrates the transformation, you have to do it. SPI of course is all about case studies. That's where I get the term, "crash test dummy" from. I just tried different things, see if it works. And people love that. They love it because it's not always going to work.

Sometimes I fail. A lot of times I fail. And that's OK. And sometimes you'll fail too. As long as it becomes a learning experience for your audience, it's worth it. And at least you try, right? Try something, see if it works, and share the results. That's the best way to get completely unique content because no one else will have that same experience. No one is like you but no one else will also have the same experiences as you. And people love the case studies and experiments to help you prove a point, which ties in to content type number three a little bit, which is research and data.

Research like legit research, it's awesome because if there are some good data and conclusion behind it, I mean the numbers don't lie. I mean this really helps you support your point. Plus, it's just really interesting to hear the science and psychology behind why things are the way they are. And as a content producer, it just makes the audience believe that you did your research too.

In my presentation about the power of using free in your business, I talked about research that was done by a professor of behavioral economics at Duke University. Dan Ariely is his name. And in his book, *Predictably Irrational*, he talks about this experiment, this research that he did with his students at Duke University which involves selling chocolates to college students. He sold Lindt chocolate truffles. These are like the most amazing chocolates in the world for $0.15. And he also sold Hershey's Kisses for a penny. Now in that run, most people, seventy-three percent of people actually bought the truffles. Twenty-seven percent bought the Hershey's Kisses, which makes sense. The quality was way worth the $0.14 difference. Lindt truffles are just worth that much more that's why people bought them.

But then in the second experiment, a second run, he lowered the price of each chocolate by $0.01. So the truffle was sold for now $0.14 and the Kiss went from $0.01 to free. The same difference in price, $0.14 and the chocolates never changed. But the data did. The numbers switched. Seventy percent of the people who came up to the table took the Hershey's Kisses for free and only thirty percent got the truffle. And it's a pretty cool experiment and I shared it because it showed how people gravitate toward things that are free just because they're free. But people love the data. People just go gaga over data.

And when you share this research and these experiments, a few things to keep in mind when you do this, a) I hope you'll do it and b) just keep these things in mind and it's actually a tip I got from Derek Halpern who reads this kind of research night and day which is why people including myself love his blog, [Social Triggers](#). It's just full of these kinds of research, experiments, and case studies. His advice is when you share this sort of data and these experiments and this research, always mention the full name of the professor or the people behind the experiment and also the qualifications.

For example, like I just did. I shared Dan Ariely, professor of behavioral economics at Duke University. It sounds impressive and it makes the research more real to those in the audience and it's more compelling. Also, use exact numbers too if there are any numbers involved, seventy-three percent, twenty-seven percent. If there are dollar amounts, go to the cent if possible. Instead of saying, "Oh, I made $4,000 last month." Say, "I made $3,912.15." Again, it makes it more legit.

So that's the three types of supporting content for you, stories, case studies and experiments that you, your audience does, and three, research and data.

Now finally last but not the least, and again, these are tips to help you create better content, more memorable, more impactful content. The final tip is this, **tip number five, create memorable bread.** Bread? What's that mean? Well, your content is like a sandwich. Your supporting content, the part that's in the middle is your meat. The beginning and the end of your presentations are the bread. You have to have a great and compelling beginning to your content and you have to have and even better ending.

The beginning is what draws people in. It's what captures their attention and lets them know that they should stick around. When you bite into a sandwich, the first thing you bite is the bread and you just want to keep going if it's good, right? And the end is what

people remember because it's the last thing they experience before they leave the room or they finished that podcast episode or stop reading your content.

So let's start first with the beginning. I think too many people think about the start of their presentations first. Before like creating an end supporting content, before thinking about the transformation even, they think about what they're going to say first. And that makes sense because it's the first thing in the order of the presentation or the first part of the piece of content you're creating.

But in my last few presentations specifically, the beginning was actually the last thing that I figured out. Part of that is because I knew I wanted the beginning to be awesome so I wanted to spend more time on it. But it's also because I know that if you can get the supporting content down, the meat down, how you start off will become that much clearer.

In my presentation about free for example, I had all the supporting content there already. And it wasn't until a week before the presentation that I finally ask myself, "OK. I have all these great content in the middle here, how am I going to draw people in right from the start?" I need a way to show everyone that free just makes people do crazy things. It gets people to act irrationally. And that's when I started searching on YouTube and Google for things like what will people do for free or what people will do for free things or crazy things people have done to get a free blank.

And that's when I stumbled upon a video that I found which actually shows people pressing a button and it was actually a marketing campaign but it was a fun little experiment too. This video shows people pressing a button, a big red button on this machine. In the middle of a shopping area, they get a free box of chips or crackers or whatever. It's not a US-based product so I don't know exactly what it was.

But it starts off by someone pressing it a hundred times and then they get this box. It comes out of the bottom. And they walk away. And then 200 times and then it showed somebody clicking it 500 times. And then there was one woman who is shown on the screen, 5,000 times and she's clicking away. It's like 4,999, 4,998, blah, blah, blah. And it's really funny. I mean she's there forever. People are laughing and she's just drawing this huge crowd. It's a really funny creative video.

And so I decided to start with that. And what was cool is that it broke the ice right away. It held people's attention. It was funny and compelling and it was only a minute and a half long. And it made me, the presenter, more comfortable before it was time

for me to speak. People were already engaged before I had to do anything, which is pretty cool.

So that's one way to start a presentation, a video that sort of relates to everything you're talking about. But another tried and true method of starting any piece of content is to go straight into a story. And in my most recent presentation, I decided to do that. Oh, my voice is going away. I'm almost at the end here. But I decided to tell a story about how my wife, April, became a Backstreet Boys' fan when she was a teenager, which culminated into a video of her in present day.

This was recorded like a couple of weeks before the presentation. It was a recording of her rummaging through her Backstreet Boys memory box or whatever you want to call it. And she pulled out programs from concerts and action figures of these guys. It was crazy. I mean even a framed picture of one of the members. And then April said some things that are terribly hilarious. I mean mostly because they poke fun at me.

But that was a memorable way to start and engage the audience. If I simply just said, "Hey, here's why raving fans are important. Here's how you can get them." That's kind of boring, right? Start with a story especially if you have a personal one that goes with the topic and the transformation you're creating content about and double especially, share a story if there's a way for you to sort of tear yourself down a little bit and bringing to the audience this level just like April did for me in that video which you'll see that video when that presentation goes live on the blog, very soon hopefully. My guy is editing it right now.

Now, on to the ending. I've it way too many times, in my blog posts, podcast episodes, and especially in live presentations. The ending sort of just gets overlooked and forgotten or whatever was put there was almost just an afterthought or it was just put in the last minute, which is sad because many of those presentations were really good. The conclusion just doesn't do the rest of it justice. And unfortunately like I said, it's the last thing people remember. So you could have the best piece of content in the world, the best presentation, the best podcast, the best blog post but if it doesn't end well or if it's sort of just ends abruptly without thought, the rest of the presentation or the rest of that content just suffers which is not what we want to happen.

Online in blog posts, podcast episodes, videos, webinars, and actually now that I'm thinking about it, in all the types of content including live presentations, you definitely want to leave with a call-to-action in mind. Have people take the information you've shared with them and put it to good use. Actually do what was talked about so they can

see the results of what they learned and become even bigger fans of what you do. That call-to-action is extremely important and of course, it should be related directly to what the transformation you want your audience to go through. That's a given of course.

Now, the ending actually is something I've always struggled with as well. And yes, the call-to-actions are there but like many others, it would be an afterthought or I'd say to myself, "Well, if the rest of the content is good then the ending will just work itself out or people will remember the middle." Yes, they will remember the awesome stuff in the middle but like if your bread is old and moldy like it doesn't matter what you have in the middle, right? Your sandwich is ruined. No moldy bread. We don't want any moldy bread.

So how can you tie everything together? In some of my more successful presentations that I've done, I've concluded these presentations by getting my audience involved. And this works in online form of content too. Actually, have the audience participate in something or if you can't get everyone to participate, have one or two people participate. And what happens is that those one or two people, they sort of represent the entire audience. So the entire audience feels like they're getting involved anyway. But put that information to the test that you just shared and demonstrate how it works.

I did this in a live presentation at NMX, two NMXs ago, the free presentation. And I actually called two people up to the stage instead of doing a regular Q&A. I actually did what I like to call, a reverse Q&A. I actually asked questions to people who came up to sort of dissect their business and then help them figure out a way they can use free in their business. And what this did is it helped those people directly of course but also, helped the entire audience see how everything was implemented.

It was pretty cool because one of those people who came up was actually John Dumas from Entrepreneur on Fire when he was first starting out and to this day, he's still using some of the advice I gave him right there on stage to help him generate leads for his business, which is awesome.

Now, beyond just getting people to participate, and again, that can't always happen. But if it can, you absolutely should do that. But beyond just getting people to participate, I think the absolute best thing you can do at the end of any sort of content that you have live online is to surprise your audience in some fashion. That's always the best. You want to give a hundred percent to your audience but it's that unexpected one percent extra that you give that really makes people remember the presentation or the content and leaves them feeling good.

The same with your online content, it's not going to always be possible and of course, you want it to make sense and you want to be relevant and not forced. Like if I were to say, "OK guys, thanks for listening to this episode. I'm giving away Kindle to a random listener." I mean that's kind of cool but that's not memorable. I mean the Kindle has nothing to do with this piece of content.

And it doesn't have to be something you have to purchase either. It could be for example, in episode 78, when Clay Collins from LeadPages joined us, he said for a couple of months after that episode went live, he would come back to the blog, read the comments, and critique anyone's best opt-in lead magnet headline. He asked people to leave a headline and Clay would come back and sort of critique it and offer better suggestions. And that's why there are almost 700 comments on that podcast episode.

But the point is, that was an awesome unexpected surprise by him. And it was actually a surprise to me too actually when he suggested that. It's super cool. Definitely memorable. And what was really cool about that is it sort of combined a call-to-action which was to leave a headline and combined that with getting people involved and the surprise, Clay coming on and critiquing and offering suggestions, which was pretty cool.

So, how about that? We finished our tips for better content creation. My voice is about to go but let's go through these tips one more time.

Tip number one, think about the transformation. What's the transformation you want your audience to go through?

Tip number two, reverse engineer and think about all the objections your audience might have to what you're about to share in that piece of content.

Tip number three, subdivide the route. Take that destination and turn it into turn by turn instructions. Break up your content so it's easily digestible.

Tip number four, think about the different types of content you can create. Use more stories, case studies, research.

And tip number five, the bread. No moldy bread. Good start, good finish so the entire meal just comes together. And that's number five on purpose because you should think about the beginning and also the end of your presentation last. Get that middle stuff.

Get the transformation first but then get all the supporting content in there in the middle. The beginning and the end will come, I promise.

And I want to thank you so much for taking time out of your day and spending it with me here on the podcast. I appreciate you so much. And thank you to everyone who had wished me a quick recovery. It wasn't quick. That's for sure. But I'm here and I'm delivering as much as I can for you.

Let me know what you think, head on over to the show notes, SmartPassiveIncome.com/session94. Leave me a note. Also, if you have time, write me a review on iTunes, an honest one if you haven't done it yet. Now is the time. You only have to do it once. And I look forward to your honest feedback. Thank you so much. Chat soon. Take care. Stay healthy, healthier than me. And I'll talk to you later. Peace.

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