

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

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INTERVIEW WITH ALYSON LEX

Susan Friedmann: Welcome to Book Marketing Mentors, the weekly podcast where you learn proven strategies, tools, ideas and tips from the masters. Hi, I'm Susan Friedmann, owner and founder of Aviva Publishing and host of this exciting podcast.

Every week, I introduce you to a marketing master who will share their expertise to help you market and sell more books. Today, my guest mentor of the week is copywriting and product creation expert Alyson Lex. Alyson got her start working for 2 of the highest paced ... Alyson got her start working for 2 of the highest paid and most sought after copywriters and strategists in the world, Dan Kennedy and Bill Glazer.

As marketing manager of the Glazer-Kennedy Insider Circle, Alyson got a first class education in direct response marketing, copywriting and info product creation. Since then, she's used that education to build a thriving business, providing copywriting and marketing strategies to clients all over the world to make their marketing fun, effective and profitable. One of the primary services she provides is geared towards authors who want to leverage their book to increase their income, and this is exactly why I've invited Alyson to join us today. Without further ado, Alyson, welcome and thank you for being this week's guest expert and mentor.

Alyson Lex: Well thank you so much for that awesome introduction. I am super excited to be here. I think authoring a book, is one of the most fun and hardest things you can do. I'm in the process myself. I haven't quite gotten to author status yet so I know how challenging it is to get there.

Susan Friedmann: As you know as a marketer, just writing the book is just the beginning. There's the marketing of that book that is going to get it noticed, finances.

Alyson Lex: It is. You are so right.

Susan Friedmann: Whoever you want to target, yeah. I have to ask you this. What was it like working with Dan Kennedy and Bill Glazer?

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- Alyson Lex: I wish I could tell you that was the first time I've heard that question but I'm so sorry, everybody seems to want to know. I think everyone just wants the juicy details.
- Susan Friedmann: I'm so unique.
- Alyson Lex: I'm sorry to burst your bubble there. It was really, obviously, an incredible experience to be mentored by Bill Glazer, Dan Kennedy worked
in a different office, I saw him and he would review my sales letter. I got a good one time on the top of a sales letter like a teacher and I should have framed it but I didn't. Really Bill taught me so much about copy and building an info empire and everything that goes into running that kind of business and sparked the entrepreneurial spirit within me. That happened through a lot of long hours and stressful days. It was rough but rewarding, I like to say.
- Susan Friedmann: I'm sure you've got tons of stories but what stands out in your mind as one of the most significant learning experiences for you?
- Alyson Lex: I think one of the things that was there at Glazer-Kennedy that really fostered this entrepreneurial spirit is the fact that we were all always learning. I remember asking Bill one time if I could borrow a book that I had seen on his bookshelf in his office and he looked at me, he was like, "You can always borrow any of these products any time." He had himself a library of huge product.

I think that that really showed me that, one, generosity is a big thing but two, even though he's here at the top of his game, all right, I mean everybody is looking to him and buying his products and attending his events and looking for his advice and he still seeks out advice from other people. It was one of those things like you don't ever really learn at all, your journey is not ever really done.
- Susan Friedmann: I love that. I love that. That's so true. I just see myself as the eternal student.
- Alyson Lex: Absolutely me too. I love it. It's fun.
- Susan Friedmann: It is. It is. Let's start to talk about ways in which authors can monetize their books because obviously that's the purpose of this program and

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you've got some unique ideas about that. Let's start on having you share some of them with us.

Alyson Lex:

Sure. We know that unless we're Stephen King or Steven Covey making money just on the book is probably not going to happen without a significant amount of marketing and engine behind you. Really when we create the stuff to monetize the book, create the stuff behind the book, I focus on creating actually a product or a program from the same content. That's something that I love to do, is take content that's already been created and teach it in a different way. The reason I like to do that is because people learn in different ways.

There are 4 ways that people learn. The first way is by reading, reading a book for instance. The second way is by hearing, having somebody teach you out loud. The third way is watching, maybe watching a video on the subject and the fourth way is doing. Perhaps some guided journal entries or learning how to fix a carburetor by actually fixing a carburetor. It's the best example I can think of.

If we can really incorporate all 4 of those ways into a coaching program or an info product or a live event or something like that then we can charge a little bit more for it than the 20 to 30 dollars we might be able to get for the book and be able to increase the reach that we have because we're targeting more ways that people learn.

Susan Friedmann:

Yeah. I always remember, with my first book, I wanted to cut and slice and dice it in so many different ways and create different products. You've taking it a stage further with the more in-depths programing. I did it with articles and smaller booklets and ... Same material but just in a different format because as you said people learn in different ways and some people want just a bridged version the take notes, whereas other people would want to read the whole tomb that you've written so ...

Alyson Lex:

Absolutely. I have a friend that wrote a book about, I think it was 101 Conversion techniques or something like that. I have it on my Kindle app for my iPad. He actually created 101 blog posts out of his book. He didn't monetize his book with a program but he monetized it in traffic and content for his blog. I think a lot of people are hesitant to do that because, "Oh if I put I out for free nobody will buy it." That couldn't be further from the truth because I would rather have a book in my hand than have to read 101 blog posts to get the same information. But it's

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also, again, a different medium. You're reaching different audiences because you're publishing it in different ways.

Susan Friedmann: Let's talk about your book to seminar program that fascinates me. I'm just going to throw it wide open and let you just talk about it because I know it's a little brainchild of yours so go for it.

Alyson Lex: It is. I'm super excited about it because it is brand new. It's called Book to Seminar but really we can replace Seminar with event, coaching program, self-study course, online webinar series, whatever we want to replace it with, it can be done. Basically it's a done-for-you service that I'm providing where my clients will send me a book and I'll turn it into whatever they want by pulling out the teachable information, creating a workbook around it with questions, like I mentioned a guided, to guide those students through it and also give them the materials for a presentation that they can have in-person or online. You deliver it, you record it and then you have a product.

It's really super exciting because not everybody has the ability to look at content from that way and that's something that I can bring to the table, is really say, "Okay, this is the content you have and here's how I think it's going to best be presented for your audience." As well as of course as creating those questions and things like that to help people through that. I have the ability for that.

Susan Friedmann: Yeah, I noticed that there's different learning styles as you talked about, but you need all the four to really make it stick and that more and more people are using, as we know, video and the audio and then ... But having ways in which you can work, self-motivate yourself to do it, which I know is hard, but the learning through that, if you really are dedicated to doing that, it can be very profitable.

Alyson Lex: Absolutely. It's so funny. I just opened up Michael Port's book, *Book Yourself Solid* and it's been recommended to me by so many people. He actually has a workbook that he created for the book and it's downloadable for free and I went to the little website and I downloaded the workbook and it's 100 pages. I printed out those pages and took them to Staples and had them bound into a workbook for myself. Even though it's offered for free, he's now ensuring that I'm going to use this material to the best of my ability because I'm really going to work through it and his workbook [crosstalk 00:10:24].

Susan Friedmann: And you talk about it.

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- Alyson Lex: Of course. I talked about it. Of course, and I talked about it so now everybody is going to be like, “I’m going to go check out this book.”
- Susan Friedmann: Exactly.
- Alyson Lex: But I know that once I get through the book, it’s going to have even more value for me and then that’s a really great way to introduce me to Michael Port. I’ve heard of him because of his book and I think that that’s really the biggest piece that a lot of authors miss, is that this book is your introduction. For many authors, I see all of their marketing efforts directed at buy my book, buy my book, and the book is the end game.
- If we flip that on its head, if we say, “My book is the beginning of my empire.” Then your book can feed everything else that you do. You can develop a campaign to get more speaking engagements if that’s what you want and you can use your book as part of the shopping all package you mail to event planners. Or you can use your book as the lead magnet. Give it away for free and use it as a lead magnet to eventually sell a coaching program. Your book is really the beginning of the relationship with someone.
- Susan Friedmann: I love that, because you’re right. So many people think that having the book and selling it is the destination. This mindset of turning it into an empire and this is just the beginning. You’re just really tootling out of the first station.
- Alyson Lex: If I can speak bluntly and frankly and that’s kind of how I roll so I’m sorry but you’re not going to get rich selling \$20 books.
- Susan Friedmann: No apology.
- Alyson Lex: Unless you’re Stephen King you’re not going to get rich selling a \$20 book. Let’s find a way to increase the average transaction value beyond the book. You do that with a coaching program, or a live event or any of the other things that I’ve mentioned, a product, a self-study course, an online course, something that you can charge more money for. People charge thousands of dollars for these things. That’s the sale you’re looking for.
- Susan Friedmann: Exactly. Yeah, I love that. I love it. I’ve done that with a few of my products. But I remember going back to the very first book ever I wrote, back in, I think it was the beginning of the ‘90s. I was like, I don’t want

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to sell this book in onesies and twosies because you're right. I mean the book was selling for less than \$20 and I knew that I wasn't going to get rich on it because first of all it was traditionally published and so if I saw a couple of dollars that was a lot. Each copy got sold. That's after the advance has been paid back. I've got to sell a lot of books.

- Alyson Lex: Yeah. Especially today with so many people self-publishing, and I think that's wonderful that self-publishing is available. I know the traditional publishing companies, I think there's the big five, are very difficult to publish through but there are much smaller companies that can help you though the process. I think no matter how you publish your book, right? Whether you're getting 100% of the paycheck or 10% of the paycheck, it's still not a very big paycheck. To throw every bit of your marketing efforts after a \$20 sale, that's ...
- Susan Friedmann: It's not worth it.
- Alyson Lex: Well, yeah, it's not worth it. That's what leads to burnout if you will. Where if we can really make it so that you're using it to begin the process, to begin the relationship, it just leaves the whole world open at your feet.
- Susan Friedmann: As you say, have it as a calling card, maybe giving it away and that could lead to speaking engagements, which obviously you can charge a lot more money for. There was an article recently about the Clintons and how they are charging close on 300,000 for a speech. They're celebrity speakers but even getting into the speaking business, you can be charging a few thousand dollars. You've got to sell a lot of books for one speaking engagement. Plus you of course can integrate your book as part of the program and everybody in the audience could have one and you could be selling it to the event planner at a much lower price so that it could be made available to everyone and there you've sold many several hundred books.
- Alyson Lex: That's right. Or, back to the Book to Seminar Program, you use your speech and your book as a jumping off point and then if people want more information from you, now you have something to sell them. Your book might get you the speaking opportunity and your speaking opportunity gets you the leads for this info product that you have created. It all works together, that's the whole building an empire part of it.

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- Susan Friedmann: What are some of the biggest mistakes that you see that authors make? We talked about, obviously, the mindset of the book, but what else comes to mind?
- Alyson Lex: Well, I think that the using it as the endgame instead of the beginning of the relationship, I think that's the biggest mistake. I think too, it's so funny that a friend of mine had mentioned that his first book was just like a little bit of a throwaway, that he wrote it just to write a book. Then his second book was the big magnum opus. I think that maybe what happens, and this is why I haven't published a book yet, is because my book is going to be the best book ever. You know what I mean? Like it's just ...
- I wonder if maybe I'm trying to solve all the world's problems with some paper between 2 covers here. Maybe it's just that I'm building it up a little bit too big and I need to just let it happen. I say that not as an expert-on-all-things author but on just an observer of human nature around me. I think that really it's, we try to do too much with too little space. That's another thing about these programs is that it allows you time to teach more in-depth on a subject that you probably wish you could have written about more in your book.
- We are so knowledgeable as individual experts. I'm very knowledgeable about my field and you're very knowledgeable about your field and people who are listening are very knowledgeable about their fields. I think that we under-estimate how much we actually know, versus somebody who's not in our industry. We try to just deliver this content and it might even be over people's heads because we underestimate how much we know. I think that there's something to be said for a very simple first book.
- Susan Friedmann: I would agree and one of the things too is that you can then say you're a published author. More and more now, people are expecting anybody who has expertise in a specific area that they have written a book. There's almost that expectation that goes along with that. Get that book written so you can say you're a published author.
- Alyson Lex: I was just thinking, I was like, "Oh my gosh, I'm here admitting that I don't have a book and I'm on a book marketing podcast and I have just lost all my credibility." I promise, I have it. It's started, I have title. It's called Info Process that's going to be amazing. I promise, it's happening, I'm just one person.

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- Susan Friedmann: I know that. I know that.
- Alyson Lex: No. I'm just teasing.
- Susan Friedmann: But your expertise in taking other people's material and then turning those into very salable profitable products, I think that expertise, I'm envious of that because you're ...
- Alyson Lex: Oh, thank you.
- Susan Friedmann: With your education background you're able to speak to that ...
- Alyson Lex: That's very true.
- Susan Friedmann: ... and combine that expertise with what you learned over the years.
- Alyson Lex: That's right. Yeah, I forgot to mention, I was an education major for a very long time before I took the job at Glazer-Kennedy. I decided not to pursue the teaching because of the current legislation and all kinds of soapboxy things I won't get into. I did learn how to really develop a good workbook and develop a good test. It's fun to be able to actually use some college that I went to. I'm using my education. Yeah mum.
- Susan Friedmann: Just talk more about the program and the steps that are involved in the program.
- Alyson Lex: Sure. The steps for the client are super simple. Just send me the book and send me the cover art and the source files that they have for the cover art because part of what's included is I create the art for the workbook itself. Well, I hire a designer to create it, let's be honest, and I use the same source files. On my end, at first I go through the book and like I said, I pull out all the information, I create a notes document that's basically just a really in-depth outline of the book. I'm almost reverse engineering the book.
- The reason that I'm doing this instead of asking for the notes is so that it's fresh eyes. Then I turn that into a presentation in custom slides that got some images and they look nice and it's set up. You could load it onto a phone drive take it to an event and speak the day you get it. It's totally done. In there I put notes about things like, here we're going to go to this page and we're going to work in this workbook now, and there's actually a slide that says, "In your workbook it's time to do this."

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Each chapter is a module and that's set up for a couple of reasons. Because one, you could actually customize the presentation you give by removing certain modules from the PowerPoint. Two, you can create a set of group coaching programs or an event series or a webinar series simply by breaking it up into modules or three you can just have a handy reference. You know that module 1 is actually chapter 1 and so that's a nice little organizational trick.

Then the workbook follows the presentation exactly which follows the books where all three of those things work together and it's delivered and you say, Alyson I love it. Alyson I hate it. Alyson I want some changes. We go from there. It's easy on the client's side. It's a little time consuming on my side but it's fun.

Susan Friedmann: That's invaluable because I know how many hundreds of hours I have spent developing programs. I'm somewhat of a perfectionist and I think you are too.

Alyson Lex: A little bit.

Susan Friedmann: Developing those slides and making sure that the Slides are okay and then putting together the workbook in a format that isn't just a duplication of the PowerPoint slides, I hate that. I love the fill-in-the-blank type workbooks.

Alyson Lex: Yeah, definitely questions and things to think about and even things to help somebody through the material. One of my clients is a financial advisor and he had me create a program out of his book that he was presenting. By the time they were done with the workbook, they actually had their full estate plan mapped out. All the checklists all the sheets. All the information that they needed was all mapped out for them by the end of the program so that they had something really super valuable to go home with.

Susan Friedmann: One of the things that you'd said earlier which I think is really, almost the crux of all this is that the fresh eyes looking at this material. Because we know our own stuff and we know it so well it's almost like we don't see the wood for the trees.

Alyson Lex: That's right.

Susan Friedmann: That fresh-eye look, I think is invaluable that's what you're doing.

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- Alyson Lex: I think it's really hard for us to understand where people outside of our industry are coming from, people who don't have the level of expertise that we do and so starting from the beginning rather than in the middle is something that we struggle with just as people. Because, like I said earlier, we underestimate how much we actually know as compared to someone who's not an expert in our field.
- The fresh eyes allow me to ... I hate to say it like this, but to dumb it down a little bit, for the average person. You know what I mean? Allow me to say, "Okay, you know what? This is ... This is where you're going to need to be presenting this information for these people to be ... Be able to understand you."
- Susan Friedmann: Yeah. That's a key point too, is sometimes, again, because we're so involved in it and we know the stuff, we think that just because we know it, everybody else is going to know and understand it. You're right. Sometimes we just have to dumb it down a little bit.
- Alyson Lex: I hate to use that because I don't like to ever assume that anybody is dumb but we've got to just bring it down a notch. I think that's a mindset thing too, it's something that I've been really working on, overcoming myself is because it's easy to me, I feel like it's easy to everyone. I feel like if I know it, it surely must be common knowledge. That's a mindset confidence thing that I think most business owners and entrepreneurs and authors and coaches and everybody, I think that's what they experience.
- Susan Friedmann: It's a mess. It definitely is a mess.
- Alyson Lex: Total mess. I've been totally working on breaking this for myself but I feel like ...
- Susan Friedmann: Urban legend.
- Alyson Lex: I feel like having somebody say ... A friend of mine, what did he say? It was, "When it's easy for you, it means you're good at it." That was really when I was like, "Yes, you're so right." But it also means that it's not as easy for everyone else.
- Susan Friedmann: Exactly. You've had X number of years learning it and here you're presenting it to them and you sort of expect them to get it right away. Like, come on this is easy stuff.

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- Alyson Lex: Right. What do you mean? I know this. Of course you know this. I know it. You have to know it. Right.
- Susan Friedmann: Yeah. When I wrote Meeting and Event Planning for Dummies which is one of The Dummies Series, that was really a real test to bring test to bring things down to a very soup to nuts, down to earth grassroots level for people to understand. Those books, even though, I cringe and you say, with the word dummy they're phenomenal because they really cover a subject, from soup to nuts. It's a whole extent on the subject.
- Alyson Lex: It is. Funny story about that, my husband and I are buying a house. Shortly before our wedding we were house shopping and he had never purchased a house before and meanwhile I worked at a real estate company for like 7 years, I had bought a house so I totally knew what I was talking about. Off Amazon I bought him Buying a House for Dummies or something like that and he thought it was exactly what he needed to answer all of his question, that if he had asked me all of them I would have gotten frustrated. If you think of it in that sort of framework, that's really where you've got to go with it, with somebody who's never done it before, versus someone who's got all of this experience.
- Susan Friedmann: That's why as you say brining somebody like yourself in and your program, I don't know anybody else who's doing what you're doing but that fresh eye's approach and being able to, as we say, dumb it down to its lowest common denominator so that the average person can understand it. Very much so. Tell our listeners, how they can get a hold of you.
- Alyson Lex: Well, the best place to find me is on my website. It is my online life and my website is rockyourmarketing.com and that's all spelled out just the way it sounds. Another really great place, I have some freebies available on freegiftfromalyson.com and that's Alyson because my mama was mean and spelled my name all weird but those are my 2 places that I live online and from Rock Your Marketing you can access my different programs, you can connect with me on Facebook, you can contact me directly, schedule a call, whatever floats your boat right there on my online hub.
- Susan Friedmann: Excellent, excellent. Before I let you go Alyson. I want you to give our listeners a golden nugget. Words of wisdom from the master.

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- Alyson Lex: You put me on the spot here, words of wisdom. All right, well, because we sat and talked a little bit about the mindset and the mess, there are a million reasons that you can tell yourself to not take a step forward in your business today and every single one of those will be born of some sort of fear or uncertainty. Instead of listening to that voice just take a step forward and make a difference in your empire today.
- Susan Friedmann: Excellent. I love that. Yup. That's it. Do it today because we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. Yeah.
- Alyson Lex: Do it today. That's right. You'll talk yourself out of it by this time tomorrow.
- Susan Friedmann: Exactly, exactly. The fear comes up many, many times. You're absolutely right so Alyson is saying ...
- Alyson Lex: You're not the only one feeling that fear.
- Susan Friedmann: Yes. Thank you so much for being our guest today Alyson Lex and you can reach her at rockyourmarketing.com.
- Alyson Lex: Thank you so much for having me.
- Susan Friedmann: Thank you everybody for listening. Yes. Thank you for being here and thanks for listening to Book Marketing Mentors. Until next week, this is Susan Friedmann, your host, founder and owner of Aviva Publishing.