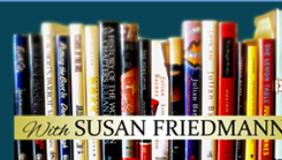


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BOOK MARKETING: HOW TO ATTRACT MEDIA ATTENTION FOR YOUR BOOK

Interview with Geeta Nadkarni

Susan Friedmann: Welcome to Book Marketing Mentors, the weekly podcast where you learn proven strategies, tools, ideas, and tips from the masters. Every week, I introduce you to a marketing master who will share their expertise to help you market and sell more books. Today, my special guest mentor of the week is media expert Geeta Nadkarni. If you've ever wondered why some of the most successful entrepreneurs in the world, including Sir Richard Branson, invest so heavily in PR, you'll want to get to know Geeta Nadkarni. As a former journalist with more than twenty years of experience in producing television, radio, print, and web, and who's been featured on CNN, the New York Times, CBS, CTV, Reader's Digest and more. Geeta has made it her mission to help experts, authors, speakers, and consultants, do their own PR in a way that makes them irresistible to the media.

Her course, Baby Got Booked, has landed her students local, national, international press within weeks, and sometimes even days, of starting. Geeta's one of my most favorite National Speakers Association colleagues. What I truly admire about her is her spunk. Since many authors crave media exposure, I knew that Geeta would be the best person to interview for this podcast. So, without further ado: Geeta, welcome and thank you for being this weeks guest expert and mentor.

Geeta Nadkarni: Hi, Susan. It is such a pleasure and honor to be here, thank you.

Susan Friedmann: You've got so much experience that you can share with our authors, as we said, who are craving media exposure. How do they go about getting that?

Geeta Nadkarni: The first thing to not do, I think, is to do the number one thing that most people do, which is to send out a press release. This is, I think, one of the biggest mistakes that people make when they want to get a journalists attention. Everyone's like, when I say this people tend to kind of stare at me and be like, "Wait a minute." If you don't send out a press release what are you supposed to do? Well, let's rewind and talk about

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what a press release actually is and how it came about. A press release basically answers the most common questions, who, what, when, where, why, how, that a journalist requires to see if there's a story there. Right? The press release came about at a time when there wasn't this huge explosion of media and multimedia and 24 hour television and 24 hour news channels and the web and so on and so forth. It was invented in a very, very different era where you had full time journalists, beat journalists, people who'd work a particular job their entire lives and have deep knowledge of a particular subject.

They had the time, and certainly they didn't have the volume of pictures that they now get. When a journalist looks at a press release, typically there's no story there yet. It's kind of a, here are the facts now you see if there's a story here. Let me tell you, these days, given how media budgets are shrinking, the same journalists who had an entire day to put together one story is having to chop that story up for web, for radio, for television, yeah you know put it in a newsletter. They're having to slice and dice and create five times the amount of content with half the budget in half the time. They just don't have time to figure out what the story is. If you don't hand them the story, pretty much already done, you're out. I think that's the big mistake that people make. When it comes to authors, there's another layer. I know ... I'm a wannabe author myself, I'm in the middle of writing a book, I'm in [inaudible 00:04:07] number two, I know how much love and sweat and toil goes into book. But the fact of the matter is, a book is not a story. Too many of us get so attached to our babies, our books, that we sort of expect the press to follow.

Again, when you pitch the press what you really want to be doing is pitching them a story and merely using the book as a kind of anchor to say, here's what makes me a credible expert in this field. But the book itself is not a story, does that answer your question?

Susan Friedmann: It does. Excuse me. Oh that's terrible. Without a press release, what's the vehicle that the author would use then to approach the media?

Geeta Nadkarni: I love this question. What I advocate for is a pitch. You'd basically be answering three essential questions that all journalists, and producers, and editors use to evaluate your ... you could call it a press release, I prefer to call it a story based pitch. A pitch is, again, like I said, it's story based, it's emotional, it is already a story. The three questions that you want to be answering right off the bat, before you get into yourself and your life history and what makes you an amazing expert and so on and

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so forth is the first thing's first. What's the story? What is it that makes this ... what's in it for the audience? Why is it relevant to the audience, right? Three questions that you really want answered. You've said what the story is and why it's relevant to the audience, you know, you're saying why now? What makes it seasonal? Why is this a topic that people are going to be interested in right now?

To answer that question, there's a few different ways to answer that question. Sometimes it's seasonal, right? If you have a ... let's say your weight loss expert, or you're a health related coach. In January or in December, January, February, December these are months where New Year's resolutions are all the rage. Everybody's thinking about joining a gym. This is very much a why now subject. People are already thinking about it, it is a seasonally trending topic. You want to hook your message onto something that's already happening in the public's consciousness.

Another way to answer the question, why now, is to see what celebrities are up to. Is ... you know, if your marriage expert for example, and your book is about healthy relationships and some huge celebrity couple has just broken up. That's an amazing why now for you. You don't have to have worked with them, you don't have to have any affiliation to them at all. But if you can dissect some of what they may or may not have done wrong, or say here's how to avoid x, y, [inaudible 00:07:13] Beyonce's breakup. For regular couples, then you can give them five tips on how to improve their communication or whatever it is that you do. Again, it's a matter of flexing your message and hooking it on to what people are already talking about. For many television shows, particularly, that is an irresistible hook. Because their always looking to cover celebrity news in a more meaty way, and this gives them that perfect excuse. Then your book just becomes that, like I said, that anchor, that beautiful pedestal onto which they can have you step up and share your expertise.

You're clearly an authority, and that answers that third question, which is why me? Why am I the perfect expert? Having a book is a great answer to that question. But you can also use, if you don't have a book, or if you're in the process of launching a book if you have other media exposure, then you can be a credible media expert. That's one of the things that I do, I don't have a book yet. But I get invited in the media all the time and part of the reason the media loves me is because the media has already loved me. A new producer who has never worked with me, feels confident in my abilities to be a great guest and a great interview because I've proven my media chops.

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- Susan Friedmann: Yeah, how do we get started though? You're known in the media, but you know, little brand new author says, hey you know, how do I get noticed? What would you say to them?
- Geeta Nadkarni: I actually have a five step free guide that answers this exact question that you can download. All you have to do is go to babygotbooked.com and just download my guide. It's five tips that will get you media with just a few minutes of work invested. It's been proven over and over and over we have hundreds of students in my course, Baby Club Booked, that have gone from absolutely zero media experience ... We have people who literally didn't have websites, they had just gotten coaching certification or they had just got their business and they joined the course. They didn't know how to even explain what it is they did in a way that made people sit up and listen. We teach all of this. One of the things that ... and five of the things that I like to teach are included in that little guide.
- Susan Friedmann: Excellent.
- Geeta Nadkarni: Yeah, so that's a great place to get started. My first piece of advice ... You know before you go and download the guide, please do, but before you go and download the guide since you're here with me listening. My first piece of advice is always to get crystal clear on what is it that I do? You really want to answer this by using words that your ideal client will use to describe that main point or their aspiration.
- First of all, this requires clarity on who your ideal client is. Many of us think we know that but when we sit down to actually write it out. I have some exercises that I make people go through in the course and it's like the least sexy, glamorous part of media, but it is so crucial because if you don't get this right, if you are not crystal clear about who it is that pays your bills, then you can get in the media. I know people like this who have gotten on big name shows and who've never had anything concrete in terms of business results to show for it. It's because they haven't invested the time to do their homework and gotten crystal clear about, okay who is that I'm really wanting to target and then what is it that hurts them? What keeps them up at 3 in the morning?
- One of the exercises I get my students to do is to really start to listen. When you're interacting with people who have already purchased from you, or somebody that you consider a hot prospect. Start to listen and take notes. Literally write them down, don't count on your memory. Even the sharpest of us we tend to gloss over words, we tend to

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substitute words. I want you to get very very specific and use the exact words that your clients are using. Often times what you'll notice once you start doing this actively is that people will use certain words over and over and over. Those are the words you want to use. When you describe what you want to do, what you do actually for people.

You want to describe things in terms of outcomes and you want to use their words. Because what's going to happen then is that when that phrase comes rolling out of your mouth ... I'll give you an example. In my world, one of the things that I heard over and over is oh my gosh I was watching TV the other day and I saw an expert in nutrition come on and I thought, that could have been me. In fact that should have been me. My information is better. She was just talking crap and it could've been me. One of my keynotes is called, That Could've Been Me. That's one of the phrases that I use to sort of help people understand what it is I do. What that does, when people read your quote in a magazine or they hear you on television the little hairs stand up on the back of their necks because they think, she's talking directly to me. She really gets me. Then they want to know more.

Susan Friedmann: Yeah, yeah. Very much so, very much so. It's surprising how many of my authors say you know, my book is for everyone. That makes it so much harder, as you say, to pitch it so being crystal clear on who that audience really is essential.

Geeta Nadkarni: Absolutely. Can I jump in here and say something to that person who says?

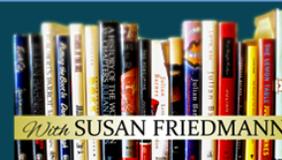
Susan Friedmann: Absolutely.

Geeta Nadkarni: If you say that your book is for everyone, and I completely understand where you're coming from. For example, my course is for business owners of all different sizes. Anybody who considers themselves an expert, somebody who can take information, of which there's no shortage, and turn it into transformation. We're talking small business owners, larger business owners, politicians, authors, speakers, coaches, you name it their my audience. That's a pretty wide pool that I'm drinking from. How do I take my own advice in terms of getting specific?

Well, one of the things I teach my students to do and I'm my own best [inaudible 00:13:51] on this way, is that depending on the outlet that I'm targeting. For example, if I'm going off to a working mother magazine, I will make sure that all of my language, all of my examples,

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all of the content that I create for them is really targeted and specific towards working mothers. On the other side of the spectrum, if I'm targeting speaker magazine, which I know is a very different ... It's a got a much wider range of people who read it and who are experts, there's a lot of different types of experts there. But I know that what unites them is that they get up on stage, they have travel involved, I kind of understand how their businesses work because I'm like that too, my business is like that too. I will make sure that all of my examples, and all of my language speaks directly to them.

You can speak to everyone, just not at the same time.

Susan Friedmann: Okay so it's really sort of targeting or, what's the word, tailoring your message to make that specific audience?

Geeta Nadkarni: Yes. I got a flex in your message, and it's the exact same mechanism that you would use if you were a professional speaker talking to an association of engineers versus an association of women entrepreneurs. You're just going to tailor your message differently, you're going to have different examples, and you're going to have, how shall I put it, it's the language and the feeling and the emotion is a little bit different. What excites a group of male engineers will be significantly different from what excites a group of young mothers who launched their own companies. There will be some things that are the same, and you will keep your core content the same. Again, it's just literally it's like changing outfits. You're the same person but you've changed your outfit. You're changing the outfit on your content to speak directly to your audience.

Susan Friedmann: Let's talk about finding the right people to talk to at the radio or TV stations. How would an author go about doing that?

Geeta Nadkarni: Typically what I like to tell people to do is first of all, and lots of people skip over this step because they tell themselves the story that they don't have enough time. What PR agencies do, that I did on [inaudible 00:16:25], and I say this as a journalist with more than 22 years experience. Because I used to get a lot of these PR press releases that I used to just delete immediately. Seriously, I had carpal tunnel syndrome at one point just from my delete finger being overused. [inaudible 00:16:43], there you have it. I know I'm not the only one.

Susan Friedmann: That's right, I've heard that many times.

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Geeta Nadkarni:

Right? The truth of the matter is that I care more because somebody who is willing to flex their message and tailor their content and speak directly and soulfully to my audience. Which means, they have to have done their homework. I've had, you know when I worked in television I've had people pitch me and say, we hope this is a good fit for your magazine. I'm like, clearly this is one of those spray and [inaudible 00:17:18] press releases. Which is exactly as elegant as it sounds, you've just thrown this out too as many journalists as you can find. It's one of those exactly as you said, it's a press release meant for everybody. Nobody has done any tailoring, nobody has done any research. If you want to get on a particular show, if you want to get on a particular magazine, then you absolutely want to do your research, listen to several episodes of that show, watch it if it's a TV program, read several back issues of that particular magazine, go on that particular blog, see what works for them. Then use their language in your pitch.

Just to give you a very obvious example, a pitch to Cosmo magazine, which is all about sex and geared towards a very young female audience would be very different from something that would appear in Oprah magazine. You could have two articles about healthy relationships and they would look so different in Cosmo and in Oprah. If you tried to pitch that Cosmo piece to Oprah, guess what you'd get? You'd get deleted. Do your homework, that's the number one thing.

Secondly, a lot of journalists watch for bylines. Bylines are where you know, you have your article, Five Ways to Lose Weight in 2016, by Geeta Nadkarni. The by Geeta Nadkarni is called a byline, it says who's written the piece. Start training to watch for bylines. When you see that somebody seems to be covering a lot of ... Or seems to be writing a lot of articles in your niche, or niche as Americans would say, then you want to start to follow them. Google them. See if they have website, find out as much as you can about them, follow them on Twitter. I teach, something that I teach in the course is how to use the power of Twitter lists. I don't use social media a whole heck of a lot in terms of growing my audience, but I use it extremely strategically in terms of growing my reach within the media.

Susan Friedmann:

Can you talk more about that?

Geeta Nadkarni:

For sure.

Susan Friedmann:

That's fascinating to me.

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Geeta Nadkarni: I'm all about aggressive business growth. For example, if you Google my name and entrepreneur.com you'll find I've just launched, as of 2016, I've just launched a branded column with Entrepreneur magazine called Baby Got a Bump. I'm pregnant, which is one of the reasons I sound so out of breath, my lungs are being squished. I've launched a column talking about what it's like being the front man, or front woman in this case, of my business, the rain maker, the business leader in a young company when I have to switch off speaking which has been our primary growth and revenue generator. Because I will have to stay home at some point. I do want to breastfeed long term, so I will have to turn off speaking completely for about 6 months, at least, if not more. We're looking at how our business is going to pivot and I'm writing a column, blue by blue, as it happens, without knowing what the outcome is going to look like as we go right through 2016.

Where was I going with this? Talking about Twitter. [crosstalk 00:20:46] right. For example, if this is, the first piece that I wrote for this talks about the four different areas where I see growth being a possibility for us, none of which involve travel. Licencing our product is one of them. For example, if you were an expert on licencing you would look at my byline, you would look for me on Twitter, you would get in touch with me and say, hey I think I would be a great ... I would be able to help you out with that licencing piece, I have x, y, and z ideas would you like to know more? Do you see?

Susan Friedmann: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Geeta Nadkarni: Often times from ... So with Twitter the way that I use lists is that I have my private lists that I follow, and I'll have public lists. The difference between them is nobody when you add somebody to a private list they don't know that they've been added and nobody, none of your followers nobody else on the internet can see this list or who's in it. I just like to do it for people that I'm really really interested in following, you know competitors, that sort of thing. My public lists, I'm all like journalists I love or media partners that you know, writers that I respect, things like that. You want to name it something that your comfortable with people seeing. Twitter lets you choose whether that's public or private.

For example, if I see somebody's covering a lot of PR related stuff or writing and content related stuff, then I might add them to the journalists I follow list. They'll see that they've been added, so sometimes that creates extra engagement. What that does also is that

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instead of wasting time on Twitter, following all of the endless posts from all of the people I follow, I'm not a social media expert. I don't really have a strategy about who I follow and who I don't. I follow people for a variety of different reasons. This allows me to stay very, very focused. In 10 minutes a day, often when I'm at the grocery store, waiting somewhere, I can tap into one of these lists, look at what those people have tweeted. Because all I see its just the tweets from those people, the people on my list. Then I can re-tweet, I can engage with them, I can follow them and I can basically build a relationship with them very, very deliberately using Twitter and using very little time on Twitter. Which really was a big deal for us. Because I'm about growth in the shortest possible time, because I don't have time to waste and I don't have endless resources which I think speaks to most of us right?

Susan Friedmann: Absolutely.

Geeta Nadkarni: But I find that social media sometimes can be an absolute sinkhole and most of us don't know what we're doing. Then it just becomes an endless vortex of time and energy and money, and I didn't want to do that. I have a very targeted way that I use it, and what that allows me to do is build a relationship with a journalist covering my topic so that by the time I'm ready to pitch them something they already know who I am and my email gets opened.

Susan Friedmann: I was just going to say, would you consider using it to pitch and you've actually answered that question. However, what you did say is you build the relationship first before you just went in and say hey, would you be interested in?

Geeta Nadkarni: Exactly.

Susan Friedmann: Okay, great. [crosstalk 00:24:18].

Geeta Nadkarni: Sorry, it also shows that I've done my research, right? If I've been following them, and I've been watching what they do it also shows that I know what I'm talking about when I pitch them it's going to be useful to them.

Susan Friedmann: Excellent. Let's focus more on some of the mistakes. You mentioned one right at the very beginning, what are some other mistakes you found that people make? Whether their authors, or speakers, approaching the media?

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Geeta Nadkarni: One is they don't always tailor their content to the audience that their pitching. The second, and I think this is a really huge mistake, is they don't follow up. If you're not an absolute genius at writing, an irresistible subject line, because ... By the way, I should mention this, the days of the paper press release are dead. It's kind of useless. I mean, 8 years ago when I started in the media we all felt dread when we saw the mail person come in with their big bin with annual press releases and printed materials. We were all like, oh man, that's all going to end up in the recycling, what an utter and total waste to the planet. Email is so much. But the problem with email of course is that you can't play with color and texture and all that good stuff in somebody's ... You literally have ... Think about ... Pick up your phone and look at it. Think about how much real estate you really have when you check your email on your phone, because that is how journalists are checking their email. If you think you have email overwhelm, multiply it by 10, or even 100 if it's a national program and that's what they're facing.

How do you stand out in that sea of press releases and email overload? First of all, you never ever ever ever want to write media advisory in your press release. It's kind of obvious. It's funny, I think that the people who do it are either PR agencies, or people who have Googled how to write a press release and want to look professional. But the people who actually know what they're doing never say that. Because if it's being sent to a journalist, we kind of know it's media advisory. We know. It's okay, you don't have to tell us. Don't tell us and don't put in a PDF.

I have a formula for why Baby Got Booked pitches tend to get picked up so often. First of all, if you feel like you would like a little extra help, can I do some shameless self promotional?

Susan Friedmann: Mm-hmm (affirmative), absolutely because I want you to let people know how they can contact you and what to expect. Yes, tell us.

Geeta Nadkarni: I have a very very low cost tool that you can use where we've put together 54 irresistible headlines, or subject lines, based on what's working right now and you can get it for less than what it would take you to take me out to coffee. If you have ...

Susan Friedmann: Sold. Sold.

Geeta Nadkarni: If you have \$7 to spend, then just go babygotbooked.com/headlines, that's headlines with an s at the end, and you'll be able to download this PDF. What I love about this particular PDF that's so useful is that by

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giving you the subject lines, and we have literally ... I've given you examples and then templates for how to fill in the blanks and create your own. It's really idiot proof, it's very very simple, it's a shortcut. That's essentially what it is. It's a shortcut and they're giving you the subject lines I've kind of helped you hack the whole, what do I write about idea as well. It gives you that shortcut as well, and then if you purchase that you also get a special offer to get three templates for pitches that you can write. If you ever wanted like a fill in the blank set of templates that actually work, because we field tested all of them and they have all gotten people booked then you can get that for a fraction of what it would cost you to get one press release written by a professional. This way you have the tools to do it yourself as many times as you want. You can go and check that out, babygotbooked.com/headlines.

Susan Friedmann: I love it, I love it. Well I'm going over there right now and [crosstalk 00:28:53] absolutely.

Geeta Nadkarni: I never want to leave with you the option of just having to pay so I have an answer to sort of a quick outline.

You'll see this, once you have the templates this will all make so much more sense and I've given you, again I've given you examples of actual press releases that we've used for real. Like real pitches that we've sent up and have gotten people crazy amounts of press and then a template-ized version where you can literally fill in the blanks and see. What it basically will look like is you have your irresistible subject line, then you say, dear so and so and you write the journalist's name. Try and find out their name and don't just leave it to chance and faith. Often if you Google a show you can find ... Look for staff, or crew, if it's a newspaper Google the name of the newspaper and the word, masthead. M-a-s-t-h-e-a-d. You will be shocked at how much information, including phone numbers, and email address you can find online for free.

Once you have this information you write to them and you say, I loved your piece on whatever it was that you've Googled and sort of read through to know that they're the right fit for your piece. I have something that I think would be an amazing, awful amazing value to your audience. Then you hit them with the headline, which can be a variation of the subject line. Again, I give you all that information in that PDF, the \$7 PDF. Then you say, then you answer those three questions I talked about. Why now? Why is this relevant? Why you? Then you're done. You're actually done. You want a sexy bio, you want a template

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for an easy bio. I'll send you the link Susan, but I have a piece that I wrote for Entrepreneur Magazine, so if you Google my name and entrepreneur.com you can go and find it. Basically I've given you a template for how to write a media [inaudible 00:30:46] bio. If you purchase the pitch template, the three pitches that build a press release it's in there.

Susan Friedmann: Perfect, wow. Wow. This is invaluable information so if you were just to leave our listeners with a golden nugget of information, and you've already given us so many. But if it was just one word of wisdom, what would that be?

Geeta Nadkarni: Follow up. It's all about the follow up, and this is true in everything. You may, even when you write the sexiest pitch in the world, if that journalist is on tight deadline, if that journalist is on vacation, if that journalist's child is sick and she had to take a half day, she may not see it. In which case, she and you would both lose out on a golden opportunity to get your message out into the public's consciousness. My suggestion, and we have a tool in our course where we have an actual follow up calendar, telling you which day to pitch and which day to follow up. But my suggestion is always pitch once, follow up at least twice, and then the third time you follow up pitch a new idea. That way they see that you're consistent.

Who do we like to play with? We like to play with people who are serious about what they do, which means they're consistent, they have no shortage of ideas, they're not one trick pony's. Most of us are not one trick pony's. We just come across that way because we give up too easily, so don't give up. If you don't hear back about one idea, pitch another idea. You know, I like to have five different media outlets that I have on my list on my, I want these logos lists, at the same time. That way I'm not stuck trying to chase just one particular outlet, which may or may not, for whatever reason that I can't control which may not be the right fit for me. You know, the reasons vary from they've just covered that subject and don't feel ready to cover it again, to they have somebody that they have an existing relationship with that they're not willing to shift from for whatever reason. It may take you a little bit more time to break into that if that's the case, so you don't want to be wasting your content or getting frustrated if that's not working out immediately. Which is why I tend to recycle my content and pitch similar ideas to at least three or four different media outlets at the same time.

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Susan Friedmann: Wow.

Geeta Nadkarni: Slight note here because I know I will get this question, a lot of them are thinking, you're not supposed to pitch at the same time. Yes. Technically you're not supposed to do it but we all got to know that it happens. The way that I like to do it is if I have my heart set on, for example, getting into Entrepreneur Magazine, then I do pitch only them first. If they don't respond then I'll go down my list to all the others that I'm interested in. I start with the one that I want the most, and then I go down my list. Does that make sense?

Susan Friedmann: Oh it certainly does. Wow, wow. I think we could keep on and on because you've got so many gems of information so I'm hoping that we can get you back on the show and

Geeta Nadkarni: I'd love that.

Susan Friedmann: We can really drill into some of these different elements that you've talked about. It's been wonderful, so thank you. Thank you so much and thank you all for taking precious time out of your day to listen to this interview and I sincerely hope that it sparks some ideas you can use to sell more books. Here's wishing you much book marketing success.