

BOOK MARKETING MENTORS

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BOOK MARKETING: Upside Down Marketing for Authors Interview with Jay Baer

Susan: 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 marketing guru, Jay Baer. In addition to being one of my favorite people, Jay is a New York Times best-selling author of five books, including my personal favorite, "Youtility: Why Smart Marketing Is About Help Not Hype," which made it to number three on the New York Times best-seller list and was a runaway number one Amazon best-seller. I'm sure his new book, "Hug Your Haters," is well on its way to equal that success.

Jay has spent 23 years in digital marketing, consulting for more than 700 companies. His current firm, Convince and Convert, provides digital marketing and online customer service advice to some of the world's most important brands, like the United Nations, Allstate, Cisco and Oracle. I'm proud to call Jay a friend and a National Speakers Association colleague, so, Jay, a big welcome to the show, and thank you for being this week's guest expert and mentor.

Jay: Well, I'm delighted to be here. I don't know how much expertise I have, and I don't know that I qualify as a mentor, but I will do my very best to fake it for the next few minutes for you and your audience.

Susan: I'm sure you'll do a wonderful job at that. Jay, you're brilliant at turning people's approach to marketing upside-down. How would you recommend a first-time author go about competing for attention marketing and promoting their book?

Jay: Well, I think the challenge is ... and we actually talk about this in the Youtility book ... that marketing is harder than ever, and it doesn't matter whether you're marketing a car or a restaurant or a book, there's more competition than ever. Everybody is competition, everything is competition, and so the tendency, of course, in that kind of climate, is to shout louder, to push harder, but actually, that doesn't work, as we've discovered.

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The best way to do it is to focus on just being useful. How can you take the lessons in your book, the key bits and pieces of your book, the thesis of your book, the best parts of it, and give it away one little bit at a time? The way to think about this is, how can you give away information or storytelling snacks in order to sell the larger meal, which is, in fact, the book?

Susan: A question that I always get when I talk about giving things away is, well, if I give that away, why would somebody want to buy the book?

Jay: Because giving little bits of the book away one at a time, a few at a time, in different places, is not the same experience as a book. The metaphor I like to use is, a list of ingredients doesn't make you a chef, it's just a list of ingredients. If people can get your entire book, and they get the exact same experience and the exact same pleasure and the exact same information out of a series of blog posts or Instagram posts or anything else that you might do sequentially in terms of your book, then you probably need a bigger and better book, and so it's not the same experience.

One of the things that's really tricky in today's marketing climate is, you have to trust that your readers and your customers will reward you eventually. If you give them something of value, you have to trust that they will pay you back for that by actually buying the book and telling their friends and buying more books, etc. If you are fearful that you have to keep all the good stuff to yourself until they give you money, it's probably not going to work.

Susan: In your book, *Youtility*, you discuss that concept of building loyalty with information. Is that what you're referring to here?

Jay: Absolutely, absolutely. In fact, when I wrote that book, I had written dozens and dozens and dozens of blog posts about the concepts in the book before the book was published. I had given probably 30 to 50 speeches all around the world about the concepts of the book before the book was written, and those speeches are available in full text and full length online. I had done dozens and dozens of podcasts about the concepts in the book before the book was written, and so if you wanted to figure out what that book was about and not buy the book, you could certainly do that, but nobody's going to take that kind of time.

Nobody's going to say, hey, you know what I'm going to do, I'm going to save \$17 by doing this massive amount of research and cobbling together what Jay thinks in all these different places so I won't have to actually buy the book. What you do and how you talk about the book and how you give away the pieces and parts of it, the small pieces, the small parts, that is just marketing. It's not one or the other, you are building demand for the concepts in the book by talking about those concepts a little bit at a time and in as many places as

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possible.

Susan: I couldn't concur more with that, because I just love giving away information. I know that people talk about being information mongers, so that's definitely a concept. In your book, *Youtility*, you outline a powerful marketing blueprint. Could you take us through that blueprint and share how authors could use that to their advantage with their book?

Jay: I think the easiest way to get into that is just to define what *Youtility* is, and it's spelled Y-O-U, tility, Y-O-U-T-I-L-I-T-Y, and the definition of *Youtility* is marketing that's so useful, people would pay for it. It's marketing with so much intrinsic and inherent value that if you said, hey, would you kick in a few dollars to receive this, people would say, yeah, I absolutely would.

I'll give you an example from a guy who isn't an author in the classic sense, but I love this idea. He's a realtor in Tallahassee, Florida. This guy's name's Joe Manausa, and so he's a realtor that only represents sellers. He doesn't represent buyers, but he only represents sellers who have homes between \$200,000 and \$400,000; that's his market. If you have a home at that price point, typically, you think to yourself, well, I could either use a realtor or I could sell this home myself and keep the 6% real estate commission. That's a very common mental calculus that people do.

Well, Joe understands this, and instead of saying, let me create a bunch of information that tells you why realtors are all-knowing and all-powerful and why you couldn't possibly do this without a realtor, and let me give you all kinds of testimonials about how great I am and how great realtors are in general, he goes the exact opposite way. He goes information jujitsu on you. He wrote a 65-page, totally free, downloadable e-book in pdf, has it all over his website, and it's called, "How to Sell a Home On Your Own," and it is, Susan, quite literally step-by-step exactly and precisely how to sell a home on your own.

You might think, why would you possibly do that? Why would you tell people all the information they need to not hire you? Here's why. People get to about page 25 and they realize, holy cow, it is way harder to sell a home on my own than I ever expected it to do. I can't have the time to do this. I can't. I got a job, and his name and phone number and email address are on every single page of this book. It is his number one source of new customers.

Susan: Brilliant. Absolutely brilliant. I love it, I love it. Going back to the blueprint, take us through this blueprint.

Jay: One of the things that I think is tricky about the *Youtility* concept is that it is a blueprint, but I don't want to emphasize it too much, because you have to think

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about what do you have, and what can you provide, or what can you create? What I've discovered even since I wrote the book ... and one of the things that's challenging about writing a book about marketing, is that as soon as you finish the book, it is out of date at some level, especially when you write about digital marketing as I often do. It's a cross I have to bear ... but one of the things I've discovered since I published Youtility in my work with lots and lots of companies putting these principles into practice is that while the blueprint is important in the book, I don't really want to go into it here because I don't want people to cling to it as the way to do it.

I think it's more interesting and useful to think, I am an expert. Everybody who writes a book is an expert at one or more things, otherwise, you wouldn't even try to write a book. I think it's important to say, what do I know or what can I offer or what can I make, and then give away to potential readers that demonstrates that expertise but also is of real value to them. When you do that, when you give away something useful, three things happen.

One, it introduces people to what is the rest of your book. It is the hors d'oeuvre of your expertise. Two, it actually convinces them or introduces them to what you know and who you are. Three, perhaps most importantly, it builds a bond of kinship, because they say, wow, this is really valuable. I can't believe that Susan gave this to me for free. That's really awesome. That part is incredibly important, because the reality is, the way books are sold in the real world is this: 50% of the books that you sell for the rest of your life, you could have sold if the pages were blank. People will buy the book because it came from you. They're buying the book because of you, their relationship with you, what you've done for them in the past, how you've been useful to them in the past, that they would buy anything from you. That is half of the books you will ever sell.

The other half are people who buy books because of what the book contains, and so when you give away information that demonstrates what the book contains, a little bit at a time, they get that advantage as well, so you actually bridge both sides of the book buying audience when you use Youtility. You build kinship among people who want to buy a book because of the relationship, and you drive interest among people who want to buy the book because it's interesting and useful and has information or an angle that they particularly like.

Susan: Let's focus on the digital marketing side and what authors can do. The first thing they say is, what should I do, or they see the first thing is they talk about building that Facebook page and Twitter, but how would you go about developing the right plan for their digital marketing?

Jay: There's really two sides to this. There is a plan which is, how am I building my own reputation so that the first 50%, the people who would buy anything that

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you sell, know how to find you, that they become part of your tribe, as Seth Godin calls it, and so you have one plan which is what we would call personal branding ... I don't love that term, but that's the term of art that's used in the business now ... and so that line of digital is about you, and considering it's about you, it has to be more personal and human.

That's where you do things like, yeah, Facebook, kind of, but the trick about Facebook is that, to some degree, the people who you're going to connect with in Facebook already know you. It's like preaching to the converted. If I was starting today and I didn't have any of this backstory that I have, I would do as much stuff with video as I possibly could. I would do YouTube video, I would do Instagram, short-form video, I would do live a video on Twitter, I would do live a video on Facebook. I would build a persona and a reputation and a personality around me and my work through video, because everything is going video, everything. It's all going that direction, so I would essentially turn myself into a TV show and I would use that as the digital strategy for my own brand, for Jay or for Susan.

Then you have a parallel strategy, and the parallel second strategy is about whatever the next book is. What can we do, what can we contribute, what can we create online that talks about that book, and that book is coming. First you start to seed it and maybe you have a blog, and in that blog, you serialize the book or you give away pieces of chapters.

One of the things I think is really interesting, if you're not too far along as an author, is getting your fans involved to say, okay, I've got a choice here. This chapter can go this direction or that direction. What do you think we should do? Start to get people involved. I shot a lot of videos when I was writing my most recent book and actually asked for comments from people as I was writing. What do you think? What do you think? What do you think, so that people are invested in the project as the project is being created, and I think that's a nice way to build anticipation.

Susan: That's brilliant. I've noticed that you use SlideShare a lot. Talk to us about SlideShare.

Jay: SlideShare is so interesting. It is perhaps, other than Snapchat, SlideShare is probably the most underrated digital opportunity out there. SlideShare is owned by LinkedIn now, the business-to-business resume site, and SlideShare has a higher concentration of users that are business owners and executives than any other single website on the Internet.

SlideShare, the easiest way to describe it is it's YouTube for presentations. You can create a presentation about anything and put it on SlideShare and you can

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generate lots of exposure for your ideas on that platform, especially if you're modestly good at PowerPoint presentations. However, what's interesting is you can now put video into your presentations that are on SlideShare as well, so you can have a PowerPoint presentation that's intermixed with videos of you, which can be very, very compelling and persuasive. If you are a non-fiction author, doesn't matter what your topic is, if you're in non-fiction, you should be all over SlideShare. You should be taking your ideas and creating a number of different SlideShare presentations based on those ideas.

Susan: You mentioned Snapchat. Talk to us about that.

Jay: Snapchat is mobile chat, photos and videos. It is the second most popular social network in the United States behind Facebook. Most people wouldn't think that to be the case, but it is true. It is far and away the most popular social network amongst Americans under the age of 25. It will get older as social networks always do when they're adopted, and so people who are 18 start using it and then 21 and then 25 and then 28 and then 35 and then 42 and then 45 and then 52 and then 55; that's happening right now with Snapchat.

Snapchat's an interesting tool in that it's a little bit harder to gain an audience there than it is in other places just for some technology-specific reasons, but it can be a very compelling platform for motivating smaller groups of hyper-loyal fans and readers, because it is authentic and real. The thing about Snapchat is you take a photo or a short video, and it expires. It literally disappears 24 hours later, so it's gone for good. You might think, well, why would I want to do something where it's gone for good, because there's no ability to archive that, and that's true, but because it's gone for good, it's very, very compelling and it's very, very real. You see celebrities, authors, musicians, business people using Snapchat to give their fans a glimpse of what their real life is like. It's almost like a behind-the-scenes documentary that plays out in a series of 6 and 8-second videos.

Susan: How would that compare to Periscope?

Jay: Periscope is live streaming. Periscope is, I turn on the camera and I talk into it, or I show you something, and I can do that for an hour. Snapchat is 6 seconds and then another 6 seconds and then another 6 seconds and another 6 seconds. It's more like Twitter in that way where it's individual, short messages stacked one on top of another, where Periscope is more like a television show, but both are useful, and in, to some degree, the same ways, which is to connect with readers and potential readers in a more personal and visceral way.

Susan: Again, as a first-time author, which would you recommend? Which would give us more bang for our buck?

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- Jay: It depends on your audience. If your book-buying audience skews younger, I would say Snapchat. If your audience does not necessarily skew younger, I would say Periscope, at least today.
- Susan: How about Twitter? Where does Twitter fall into all of this?
- Jay: Well, Periscope is owned by Twitter, and so when you use Periscope, it automatically gets inserted into the Twitter stream, and so, to some degree, it's six of one, half dozen of the other. Twitter, in and of itself, has become massively more visual in recent months. Lots of tweets now are accompanied by photos, by short videos, by live-streaming videos, so you don't send a lot of tweets now, at least you shouldn't send a lot of tweets now that aren't accompanied by some sort of multimedia.
- What's funny about this, as a social media guy, social media, a few years ago, was all about writing. It was who could write a clever sentence; that was really what it was. Now, it's all about pictures and videos, and so it's a much different game than it used to be. I think for authors who are comfortable on camera, who are comfortable looking into their phone and saying, hi, I'm Susan, and here's what I'm doing today, and I want to make sure you know about my new book, and here's this and that. It is extraordinarily powerful, but you have to get comfortable with that. Not everybody is innately comfortable turning on their camera and talking into it, and I understand that.
- Susan: Then, with that in mind, the whole picture, the whole visual side of it, what about the actual content marketing that was so big just not that long ago?
- Jay: Still is, still is, and so the relationship to think about is content is post-click. Let's think about it this way. Let's think about a bulls-eye. In the center of the bulls-eye is your book. The next ring out is content that is very, very useful that you're going to give away for free or in exchange for an email address so that you can communicate to that buyer or potential buyer down the road, and that is based on your book. That's the next ring, that's content, and so it might be, for ease of metaphor, let's say you're going to write 50 blog posts, and each blog post is a tiny excerpt from the book. Center of the bulls-eye is the book, next ring out is 50 blog posts that are derived from the book. The next ring out is the public piece, which is you on Periscope and Facebook and Twitter and Instagram talking about the blog posts and talking about the book, so that's the next ring out. They all funnel down to one another. Does that make sense?
- Susan: Mm-hmm (affirmative), so there's no one panacea, in other words. You've got to have a multitude of different, I call them drips. If you have enough drips, they're going to fill up the bathtub.

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Jay: Yes, that's exactly right. No, there are no magic beans. You want to be in as many places as you can do well. You do not want to be places where you have neither the time nor the inclination to do well, because the reality is that people who don't love social media typically suck at social media. It's very difficult to do this well at bayonet point if you feel like it's a chore, so what I always advise people who are authors or speakers is, look, if you like to take pictures, go get great at Instagram. If you don't mind doing video, do YouTube and Periscope. If you prefer to write, do something different, but pick the social networks that align with the kind of work that you like to do, and then find a way to get good at those social networks instead of trying to do those that are like, I don't even like this, because if you don't like it, everybody's going to notice that you don't like it, and you're really not going to succeed there.

Susan: Well, and you're not going to want to do it, so you'll start procrastinating.

Jay: Exactly, so then it makes it ... exactly, exactly. I tell you, that really is important, because consistency is hugely, hugely critical in all of these places. Look, you can't be sending one tweet a week. You have to be on top of this stuff. If you really want to use these tools and techniques to demonstrate your expertise and grow your personal brand and sell books, you've got to be active on a daily basis. You're not going to be active on a daily basis if you don't like it.

Susan: Yeah, that's sort of scary. Just saying that to me makes my ... I'm starting to shake. Talk about mistakes that authors make when they're marketing their book.

Jay: I think part of it is not really understanding, not truly understanding who the book is for, and not align in their marketing to those people. I've heard lots of first-time authors say, well, this book is for anybody. It's for all people who are adults, or it's for all people who enjoy teen literature, or what have you; that's too narrow. You need to actually focus on a much tighter segment so that you can create marketing and create information and drips, as you call them, that are going to be super-relevant to those types of people, so that's part of it for sure.

I think the other challenge is people not understanding that you've got to start marketing the book long before the book is available. The pre-order phase is the most critical phase of any book. Three to four months before the book is available is when you have to start asking people and talking about the book and putting together some sort of ideally bonus offers or things like that to buy the book, and you really have to start working the system well before the book is officially launched.

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- Susan: What about if you miss out on the launch side of it, and the book's a few months old, maybe even a year old. What about reviving it? Is there a second chance that you could have with a book?
- Jay: Absolutely. You can either do a second chance purely with marketing, in which case you might change the target audience and say, this book is also for this other group, and then create some marketing that really appeals to that particular group, or you could potentially, depending on how you've published, revise the book itself. With my book, Youtility, that we talked about, about a year after it was released, I wrote a second book called Youtility for Accountants, which is all about those same principles applied to the accounting industry. Six months later, I released another book called Youtility for Real Estate, same principles applied to the real estate industry, etc. You can continue to stoke that fire just by changing a little bit and making it then target into a different industry.
- Susan: When you do that with a book, how much of it is the original material and how of it is new material?
- Jay: That's a great question. Both of the vertical market books that I wrote, accountants and real estate, were shorter. They were 28,000 words, something like that, so not particularly long, and within that, I would say 10,000 words were essentially from the first book, and about 18,000 were new. What I did was I took all the main theses from the main book and replicated those, but all different case studies and examples, and so I essentially had to do a lot of interviews with people who were in accounting and/or real estate, and then document those interviews. It took me probably three or four weekends to create the new books.
- Susan: It's a brilliant way of giving the same material a new lease of life, and I'm always looking at cussing and dicing and slicing, and how can you do that with your material, because it's great material, so you don't want to let it disappear.
- Jay: Absolutely. Yep, that's exactly right, and you have to think about that. Essentially, a book is a collection of thoughts that are spun up into chapters, and the chapters are collected into sections, and the sections are collected into the book. Well, you can also take it the other direction and say, okay, I have the book, now how do I deconstruct it into a bunch of other smaller pieces. We talked about giving pieces of the book away in order to sell the book, but you can also then give pieces of the book away after the book has been published to continue the momentum.

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- Susan: Love it, love it. How can our listeners get a hold of you?
- Jay: My new book is at hugyourhaters.com. That's the official website for the new book, and you can find me at jaybaer.com.
- Susan: Excellent. If you were to leave our listeners with a golden nugget of information, what would that be, Jay?
- Jay: The golden nugget of information from me would be that marketing a book is way harder than writing a book, and I know you know that, which is why this podcast exists, but you need to spend just as much time figuring out the marketing plan and executing the marketing for the book as you do researching and writing the book. That doesn't mean you have to be a marketing expert. It doesn't mean you have to be a marketing consultant in order to launch and sell a book, but what I find is that most authors spend 90% of their time writing the book and 10% of their time marketing the book, and it's got to be more like 50/50.
- Susan: I love that. I'm going to quote you.
- Jay: I'm just telling you, it's true. Now, look, if you're writing a book because you just want to write a book and say that you did and it's personally satisfying and things like that, well, that's a different story, but if you want to write a book that people buy, you have to put real time and, frankly, some money into it too. You have to invest in the marketing at some level as well, and that's why I'm so glad your show is here, because it's going to tell people and does tell people what they really need to do to be a success with this kind of thing.
- Susan: Well, thank you. I really appreciate that. Thank you, and thank you all for taking time out of your precious 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.