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BOOK MARKETING: How to Create the Best First Impression on the Virtual Stage

Interview with Sylvie di Giusto

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 is a first impressions expert, Sylvie di Giusto is a professional keynote speaker and trainer. With her corporate experience and multicultural background, she helps audiences around the world understand how quickly people make up their minds whether to open the door or to shut it. With a cutting-edge approach, a competitive mindset and a passion for visualization, her unique and thought-provoking keynotes breakouts and online training programs, open participants minds to how others perceive them. And thus perceive the value of their abilities, their services or their company.

Sylvie is the author of *The Image of Leadership* and the creator of dozens of online courses, including *How You Impress*. Sylvie, I love having my certified speaking professional colleagues from National Speakers Association be my guests. Thank you. It's such a pleasure to welcome you to the show and thank you for being this week's guest expert and mentor.

Sylvie di Giusto Thank you so much for having me, Susan. I love being introduced the way you just introduced me. I'm so impressed instantly. Thank you very much. I wish it would happen this way every time.

Susan Friedmann: Thank you Sylvie. That's so nice. One of the things that I know is so important. In fact, I think it's the most important I shouldn't say one of the most important. But the fact of first impressions count. And now in our virtual environment that can be pretty scary. Let's focus this conversation on talking about that idea of, how do we create those first impressions

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especially virtually. Because that's the environment we're in now. So take it away, tell us what we need to know.

Sylvie di Giusto

You dive right into the main point of my work. Congratulations. Not a lot of people get there, this fast because usually when I talk about first impressions, people assume I talk about things like, your clothing, your handshake, the things that you say, your why isn't. That it's all important, that it's all relevant, no question. But nowadays every single day we have about 3000 context points in average. And people wonder well I don't meet 3000 people, right even if I go on the street, I might not even meet 3000 people today and I have to explain them. But the fact is that nowadays, most first impressions and most contact points happen in a digital way.

You send out emails every single day. And while you might think that you sent that email only to one person. This person could forward your email and it wanders off to places you don't even know it goes and you make a first impression. You imprint something in an inbox you don't even know that you landed. And the person could decide at this point, am I going to call you, hire you, buy your book or not. For example, email is one of those ways, social media obviously is one of those ways, virtual meetings. We have all of us become broadcasters lately. And on camera most of the time in Zoom Meetings or part of virtual conferences, your podcast. Those are all digital impressions a footprint that we leaving behind. And that impacts the way people think about us. Not just online, but also the moment when we walk through a door at one point. And very often nowadays that online footprint decides if we will ever walk through that door.

Susan Friedmann:

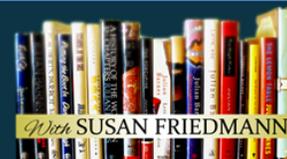
Wow, all those things that we have to think about. And I know that whole idea of let's say the email because often that first contact is the email. And whether or not I'm going to make an impression and you don't know what that is. And let's start with some do's and don'ts on emails because we could go through all of those and talk about some do's and don'ts. So let's start with the emails and then go from there.

Sylvie di Giusto

Let's start one step ahead of it, because I need your listeners to understand that there are two types of digital footprints that you actually need behind them. One is your conscious one, and one is your unconscious one. And both impact. Ffor example, how you set up emails or how you reply to emails, but also how you do your social media or what you do on your website. And to understand that your conscious footprints that you leave behind is based

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on the decisions that you make. Where you are proactively involved and decide, who am I going to put on the recipients list? What is my subject line? Am I going to use emojis in my text? Am I going to do a grammar check? But also on social media, you are the person who decides, what profile picture do I use? What do I post? What do I comment on? Who do I connect with? Who is in my friend list? What do I like on other pages?

It's that very conscious decision to interact in some way digitally. Usually people know about that, but it's the social media one-on-one or the email one-on-one the basic rules. There is also unconscious footprints that I leave behind. And it's the unconscious footprint, they're still based on my actions, but usually people are not so much aware of it. But the time that you spend online, the amount of posts that you make per day, the amount of emails that you sent forward, maybe not even so relevant topic, the amount of people that you put on CC where you think they have to reply to all and everything. Those are still conscious actions that you execute. But you are saying something in between the lines. We all have that one friend on social media where we thought really, do you have nothing else to do then spending on Facebook all day long and posting 75 statements or whatever.

But we all have that one friend in our mailbox where we thought, really, you thought that this topic is relevant for 27 people in our network. So those in-between messages that we sent, plus the data that we leave behind, because every click, every action that you make on the internet leaves data behind and there are companies interested in that data. Not because you might be so interesting, but because that data helps them to understand what your future actions are going to be. And then right in the right moment at the right time, at the right place they put, for example the right product in front of your eyes with an advertisement. Before you think about the details of what to do and what not to do. I would rather encourage you to realize there is this huge part of digital footprint that I consciously leave behind and how do I craft and design that and control this part. But also what can I make sure that my unconscious footprint that I leave behind speaks the same message and not a totally different one.

Susan Friedmann: My head is just bursting with all these ideas and these thoughts of what is conscious and what is unconscious in terms of what I'm doing. But what you're saying is that you really have to know and understand everything that you put out there. Am I getting the message correct here?

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Sylvie di Giusto

Yes. Everything. And the first step what I recommend you to do, to find out what do other people actually see is obviously to research and analyze your own footprint. Now you might think this would be as easy as just Googling your name. And certainly, that's a point where you should start. But you need to realize your computer and you are location and you are search history will impact the results that you receive on your computer. To optimize that in the first step if you research yourself, don't just Google your name. Google it in what we call an incognito mode that eliminates your search history and looks at your search results from a neutral point of view. And second, it's not just your name. It could be your name, plus your company name, your name plus your location, your name plus your titles, your name plus your email address.

Your named with the most common type post. You have to do a really in-depth research first to find out what do people actually see about me. Because you might find things you didn't even know out there that are part of your digital footprint. And then there are three problems you could have or the best case you don't have a problem at all. But it's the first problem the obvious one is, you find something that doesn't leave the footprint behind, the very obvious problem that you would [obviously 00:09:43] leaves behind. A blog that you posted years ago and you are not proud of what you wrote back then. Pictures that you posted, or somebody else and then it really depends, is it on your digital real estate and just remove it or was it on the real estate of somebody else then obviously you have to take different actions.

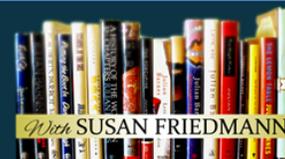
The second one and not so obvious problem is you search yourself and you find nothing. Nothing that really speaks for you, for example as an author for your expertise that you are a thought leader, then you need to think of, what actions could I take today to consciously create that footprint that when people search me, they find what I want. What do I have to add to my footprint?

And then there is the most obvious, but very risky problem, which is you share your name on the internet with somebody else. Now I'm very lucky, I have a very unique name so chances are little that happens to me. But could happen every day. What do you do right now already proactively to avoid that problem that somebody else owns your name on the internet? What could you do if that already happened, you have somebody with the same

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name, with a very strong digital footprint. Because the reality is people don't take the time to look is it really that Susan or is another Susan? If I look you up or I look for a book that you have written, or if I look for any of your authors that you've worked with.

Susan Friedmann: So much information that we could find out about ourselves, it's pretty scary. And I know that I had a Sam Richter on an interview a few weeks ago, and we talked a lot about some of these things. Let's talk about the expert footprint. If we want to be seen as an expert out there, Sylvie, what is the footprint that we need to start with?

Sylvie di Giusto There is a quantity and quality right on about approach a topic from both sides neither them one or the other work as a standalone solution in my opinion. And their quality approach is quite well with me that your first question to me was as preparation for this interview is you said, "What is the one word that describes you as an expert?" And I said, "First impressions." Because obviously if you for any reason, search something online about first impressions and you don't find me, then I have done something wrong. Because that's my thought leadership, that's what I want to be known for.

And so I would recommend listeners to define that one verse, to be ready to answer that question and to contribute content to the internet in every form that is somehow related to that topic so that chances are high when and I say, think of an expert that speaks about attention nine out of 10 people will say Neen James. When I say think about an expert who can exactly tell you what to say? Most people think about Phil Jones. So that you get known for a word or a phrase. And each of those experts works very hard in all block posts on social media profiles to leave that impression behind that this is my area of expertise. Does it make sense?

Susan Friedmann: It does make sense. And what comes to mind is how about the name? Should you have a name that says that you're a first impressions expert that you use that, or is that just something that another way that you're planting the idea in people's mind?

Sylvie di Giusto I don't actually think that it has a lot to do with the name. How you actually call it. If it's an authority, a thought leadership and expertise. It's more how can you plan and that is the quantity part. Millions of seats aren't there that

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everybody thinks immediately of you when they somehow concur this topic. That's challenged that you can help them with.

Susan Friedmann: Excellent. Now you mentioned Zoom earlier, and this is something that we're using daily. I know we're so many of us are Zoomed out, but we're still doing it. And we're creating impressions every time we get on that Zoom call. Let's talk about some of the do's and don'ts in that environment since it's so close and personal at this point in our lives.

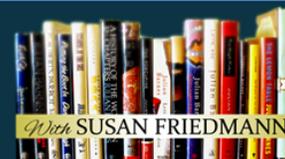
Sylvie di Giusto Each of us has become a television broadcast due to the pandemic. Since we didn't have any other chance to connect than via some virtual environment, might Zoom be the solution that we chose or any other different ones. And the reality is there is not much difference between a real encounter and Zoom encounter. People will judge you based on the same things that they will in real life. It's going to be your appearance, what they see when you turn on that camera, what do they see? What do they see on you? What do you see in the background? The visual picture that we create and broadcast out into the ground. How you behave, your body language, how you sit, your eye contact, your facial expression. You can't shake your hands anymore. But do they see your hands so the entire package of how you behave in front of the camera.

Is it obvious that you love the camera or you don't love the camera. And then obviously how you speak, the way you speak, your voice, your pace, your volume, and the things that you say. Now, the difference is that there is a huge layer of technology in between that makes it just a little bit more difficult for us at the moment. Because we are not used to. We are used to in-person and counters all the time, and we need to get used to the layer in between us, in between the person, the broadcast, that information out and us, the screen.

There are different things you can do. First. You need to make sure that your virtual workspace is set up in the right way. When I worked with people and I tell them, you know what, I can't tell you what to wear and how to sit and how to speak. But if your camera isn't set up and your microphone isn't set up right and your WiFi isn't good. Nobody's going to see or hear you. So you need to create an environment that is safe and secure that works for you. And that represents you very well and wants it works.

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And also you need to understand the different virtual environments. It's a different ball game if you are in a virtual meeting with your team, while you speak the virtual conference and present your book. It's a different ball game if it's going to be on Zoom, or if it's going to be broadcasted with another platform to hundreds and thousands of people. It's a different ball game if you are framed close with the camera while you stand away. So you need to understand what are the different rules in the different.

The second thing is you need to accept that you must fall in love with the camera. I know we subconsciously constantly look how we look. And we are tougher on ourselves than everybody else's, but that camera has to become your new best friend and you need to fall in love with the camera. You need to eliminate all those self-distracting thoughts that you might have. How you look, because you look at yourself differently than everybody else out there. They are not microlending you in, the way you do. And so you need to find and ways how you fall in love with that camera. And you need to that there are different techniques necessary to present in front of that camera. And it has a lot to do with your body language, with your facial expressions. There's such a difference between a close friend and a right friend.

There is such a difference. If I speak to a microphone on my lapel or a microphone ahead of my computer. There is such a difference in terms of how you use your voice. You got to have a delay, how you pause. So there are a few techniques that you can learn to present yourself better. And also then afterwards, look at the recording and actually can say, "Yeah good." Certainly not always do we say, "Oh my God, I love seeing myself on the recording," but at least that you say, "Yeah, that was a good job."

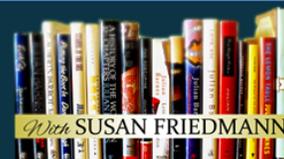
And last but not least, a lot of people ask me about how to dress in front of the camera because in the past. I have an image consulting history, and there are a few tips and tricks of things that just look good. Because you know, it's a technical environment and there are other things that don't look good, but that is an easy thing to learn.

Susan Friedmann: Tell us deal one. What should we wear and what shouldn't we wear?

Sylvie di Giusto: First of all, it depends on the environment you present in. You need to take into consideration the lighting, the background and if you stand or if you sit for an example. If you have a dark background, I cannot tell you that the

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dark colors that you will look good on you. Because you're going to be a walking hat and nobody really sees you. If you have a cold lighting environment, then you shouldn't wear warm colored clothes, because you never want to mix color temperatures. You want to stay either in the cold world or in the warm world.

Then if you stand, you will probably not have the problem that you are clothes rinky up the way they do as if you sit down. So you need to think a little bit about what you wear, depending if you stand or sit while you present. You need to think about your microphone, where you are going to put that microphone. That being said there are a lot of things that you want to avoid. And first and foremost, you want to avoid distraction and distraction could be, for example visual distraction patterns. Patterns are very difficult either if they are small, they very easily can create something called a Moiré effect. You just get dizzy, people get dizzy looking at you. If they are very big, they could just be destructive and overwhelming and to take away from the fantastic message that you have to share.

But very often, we also don't realize that our fabrics and our clothing makes noise. And that could be, if you wear a Lavalier microphone, that fabric is just wrapping each other and you don't hear it. But everybody else on your call or on your meeting can hear it or that you have jewelry tendering around or that you present on the table. And you are not aware that all the time. You put your hands on the table and it makes noise like I making now for you. So there are so many things that you want to avoid, but first and foremost, you want to avoid distraction in any way, visually and audio wise.

Susan Friedmann:

That's so important because you're right. There have been things people have got going on in the background. And my focus has been on that rather than on the presentation. And so, yes, it's very distracting. And you're right about the noise you don't realize. I remember having a lavalier microphone and it was some of my clothing was rubbing up against it. And I had no clue until somebody said to me what's rubbing, there's some noise going on. And I'm thinking, "There's no noise here." And then I realized that the microphone was rubbing against either some fabric or some jewelry. And I was totally unconscious of that. Yes. All these different things. Oh my goodness. It's like, I'm going to get neurotic next time I get on the camera.

Sylvie di Giusto

No, don't get neurotic, the only thing that I challenge everybody is to eliminate the things that you can control. Because the reality is there are

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going to be so many things that you cannot control in those virtual environments. Right from technical problems that you might not be even the reason for it. I live here in Florida. I cannot tell you how often I had an airplane over our house that is spraying for mosquitoes. And it's so loud and I cannot control it. I wouldn't even know who I would call. We all had thunderstorms, we all had the UPS driver ringing the doorbell. Even if we have a door sign out there, there are so many things that you cannot control. So control at least those things that are in your control. Does it make sense?

Susan Friedmann: It does make sense. And you're right, because I've got this whole checklist of things before I go on the air and record these podcasts. The cats go in the spare room because they know they wait until I'm on a call. And then they come knocking at my door and they start purring at it. And then you're right. The UPS man. So I take the ringer off and I put a sign outside the door, which nobody seems to be able to read even though it's in big [inaudible 00:23:18]. It says, "Please do not knock. There's a recording in session or do not ring." And they still do it. I'm like, "Okay, you're right. You can only control so much. And you do what you can." It's only natural, there are noises. Things happen. What I do like is that you said, and I'm going to remember this next time I go on camera is, "Fall in love with the camera." Which for me has been very hard. Seeing myself on these Zoom calls thinking, "I'm not too bad though in front of that camera." So maybe it's okay. I can do this.

Sylvie di Giusto We are so tough on ourselves. How often do we walk in front of a mirror and see ourselves, that's amazing. We usually focus on the things that we don't like rather than there are so many things about yourself that you would like. And so now when we see on ourselves on the screen on a recording and subconsciously know, that other people are watching us through that lens, that feeling becomes much stronger and takes over your beautiful brain and heart. And that's just not the reality. If I am a participant in a meeting, rarely do I zoom in and look at, I don't know the wrinkles that you might see or the gray hair that you might see because I'm distracted anyway by all the other people that are there. Or hopefully I'm so focused on your message and the important things that you have to share with me that I couldn't care less about your wrinkles or your gray hair or whatever you are concerned about when you see yourself.

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- Susan Friedmann: That's right. The zit on your nose, all the things that you worry about and that nobody else cares about. Sylvie this is amazing information. And I know that our listeners are wanting to know more about where they can learn more about you, your services, your programs, take it away share where they can find you.
- Sylvie di Giusto First and foremost, to find me on the internet. I hope that I can keep what I promised before that when you type in first impressions that I somehow show up that my digital footprint works for me there. And you're going to find my website which is, sylviedigiusto.com, or you're going to find my books on Amazon, for example, *The Image of Leadership* is one of them.
- But I encourage you to stop by howyouimpress.com that is my Mobile Learning Studio, where you can learn more in a very convenient way. It's not what you might think right now. It's not under the long online learning program that you have to sit down and carve away hours every single day instead, I use mobile technology and send program members short laser-focused lessons every single day. There is by the way, a course just open for registration that helps you to become a better virtual presenter. It's a 10-day course. And here's my gift for you and you have listeners. If they use the coupon code, Susan, to think about you and your fantastic podcast. Then they're going to get \$50 off at registration. How about that?
- Susan Friedmann: That's very generous. I will put that in the show notes. And so people can take advantage of that. Fantastic. And Sylvie if you were to leave our listeners with a golden nugget, what would that be?
- Sylvie di Giusto Do the best you can. That's it. Every single day when it comes to your first impression, just do the best you can and keep in mind that a first impression is just to that, a first impression. And to turn it into a lasting one, there is more to do, but just do the best you can.
- Susan Friedmann: That's so poignant. I love it. Thank you. And thank you so much for sharing your wisdom, it's been amazing. Listeners, you've learned a treasure trove of incredible information that you can use immediately, which is what I absolutely love on this program. If there's information that you can implement straight away. Thank you for taking time out of your precious day to listen to this interview. And I sincerely hope that it sparked some ideas

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you can use to sell more books. Here's wishing you much book marketing success.