

Episode 63: Title How To Make Your Summit NOT SUCK!

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Publish Date: September 25, 2019

Description: When we create an experience for our audience they go from a passive audience to an engaged participant. We can very strategically create an Edu-Tainment Netflix style summit when we incorporate the Summit Action Arc into our summits. Finally no more boring summits. That's what we are talking about on today's episode.

When it comes to summits we have boring summits, we have educational summits, and we have Edu-Tainment summits. These are the ones your audience is hoping, begging & pleading that you will create for them.

We recently released a free training called "Interview Like A PRO" at Interview Like A PRO.com where we went through the importance and specifics of having an impactful and professional Interview.

We talked about the fact that a good interview is at a minimum educational, and new information. That is a minimum. A Great interview is Entertaining. It tells a story. It allows the audience to get involved and be apart of the action.

This is what I want to talk about today. In our Summit Story course which you can check out in the resources at virtualsummits.com we talk about the importance of telling a story with your summit and your summit sessions this is what we call the Summit Story Arc. We also talk about the importance of creating an experience. An adventure if you will.

This we call the Summit Action Arc and is what I want to focus on for today's episode. It's how we create a summit that is engaging. That allows our audience to participate.

This is how we make our summits entertaining.

So how do we create this experience? It all starts with planning. Once you have gone through the Summit Story Arc and determined the story you are telling with your summit, and how you are going to create a Netflix Style Binge Worthy Summit, it's time to tie in the experience.

As you determine the story you will most likely create a theme, or a mission that your summit will accomplish. This is typically how your audience will know they got what they were suppose to out of the summit.

So now we want to look at it from the perspective of creating a feeling, an experience and how to ensure that there is actionable engagement tied into the summit and the sessions.

It is important to plan this in advance so you can tie it into the sessions, as it will become more difficult to try and go back and insert this in later.

Looking at the summit story as a whole see what the feeling is that you are trying to achieve at each part of the summit. What feeling do you want them to have, and then start to brainstorm what you can do to help them achieve that feeling.

Is there a thought that would best elicit that feeling? If so how can we help engineer that thought through engagement or activities.

Now let's talk about the different type of actions or experiences. This is as open as your creativity is vast. However we stay focused on what we need to do to create that emotion.

Obviously the ultimate end goal is the more we have our audience participating in the summit, the higher their engagement which means the more viral your summit will be and ultimately the more success it will receive.

Now before we jump into the various different types of engagement and activities to paint some pictures for you, let's look at the two different levels of engagement.

We have the Summit Level and the Session level. Obviously the session engagement builds into the overall Summit engagement creating the end result. But as I just mentioned you have to know where you are going and typically work backwards into what you are going to do on a smaller session level.

Let's assume you have determined the end goal what you want your audience to feel from the story and how you are going to elicit that emotion from different actions or activities.

For example the mission can be used to create an overall theme or goal. Is it an action theme, a mystery, or a drama? Maybe it's a romance or science fiction. The point is to get creative and remember to think like Netflix.

What category or genre do you want your summit to fall in? Now how can you make that theme come to life in your summit?

Can you and your speakers dress up in costumes, like star wars theme, or like detectives, or like athletes. Again, the options are as endless as your creativity is.

We can add props into our summit, or design the summit materials to match the theme. Like having a playbook that incorporates that theme into the summit. Your branding, messaging, and promotional materials can all tie into that same theme.

Remember this is about creating an experience. Think of it like an adventure, a movie or series that we want to take our audience on.

Not only is it going to create interest and ultimately appreciation from your audience from producing an incredible summit, but your speakers are also going to recognize your level of commitment and quality to creating an incredible summit.

Overall it will increase your success on all fronts. Yes of course it takes more work, thoughtfulness, planning and creativity, but that is the whole point.

Because summits are relatively easy and simple to produce now, we have so many people just throwing them together. And those are the boring ones.

I can't tell you how many people I see come to me for help on their summit that they want to launch in 3 weeks, and they just started a week or two ago.

You need to put thought and time into your summit. Quit trying to just throw something together. A summit is not a webinar. It's not something you decide to do last minute and then try to put it out in under a month.

I do recognize that our One-Day Summits are much more manageable and quicker to produce, but even there I'm seeing a lot of One-Day Summits that don't have a lot of thought behind them. Relatively no story tied in and absolutely definitely no action or engagement.

I'm on a mission to up level summits. No more boring summits. The way we do that is by ensuring we take the time and energy to get creative.

Here's the crazy thing, if you take a little more time and energy at the beginning to plan this out not only will your summit be more successful in the end, it will actually be much easier to organize it all because you will have a plan created to follow.

Now from a session & activity component, the goal here is to create what we call feedback loops or action opportunities. We want to try and take our summit from just being a passive experience to an engaged experience.

The way we do this is to create activities that our attendees (and speakers) can participate in.

Most common ways we currently see are through comments, groups, and live sessions such as a Facebook Like in the summit group, or a live webinar at the end to recap the summit.

Those are all great but it's not enough. You need to be thinking of different ways, & activities you can incorporate into your summit to get your audience to participate, to engage.

Another common, but very effective action arc is getting your audience to participate in an activity that you are teaching.

For example in our Interview Like A PRO training series we taught in the first session how to create an introduction that engages your audience, while making your speaker feel like a hero, but remains short and concise so your audience doesn't fall off your interview.

We call this the Perfect Intro and it consists of our Welcome Flow & Perfect Intro Formula. It is game changer when it comes creating an impactful interview.

So what did I do to create an action arc? We gave everyone who participated the information or training they needed, plus our Perfect Intro worksheet so they could create their own perfect intro. Then we ran the "Perfect Intro Challenge".

We had everyone map out their perfect intro and then record them doing the perfect intro and post those videos in our Facebook group over at "Hustle & Scale".

It created massive engagement. People were seeing everyone else post their video so it made them want to post one as well. This is the psychological trigger called social proof.

It was great. An engaged audience is always happier and more satisfied than a passive audience.

That is just one example. The goal is to create an activity that your audience can actually perform, and then get a result. From a neurologic perspective this triggers a serotonin release in the brain from accomplishing something and feeling good about it, which is why they are happier with your summit.

We want more serotonin and dopamine releases.

So what other actions can you create? Remember to think about the overall story & mission of the summit.

Having them record themselves, or create something even digital, or post something inside the summit or your Facebook group. Getting them to send you something in a message, comment, or email are all ways to create an interactive experience.

Quizzes & surveys are other interactive options. Or even at a higher level if you can have them perform something while you are doing the summit session even better.

For example if your summit was on healthy food prep, then film your speaker and yourself in the kitchen doing the food prep while doing the interview. Tell your audience in advance the shopping list to get and have them go through the actions with you during the session.

Or if you are a funnel building summit, or a Facebook ads summit, have them create something with you during the sessions. Something that allows them to interact, to engage and get a result.

You can use your summit playbook or create a map or guide of your summit with different activities or projects that your audience can do through out, to eventually accomplish the end goal. Just get creative.

Think of it like gamification if you will. What can you do to help your audience win and accomplish something as they travel along their summit journey?

Now I'm not saying you need to do that on EVERY session, all though that would be next level, but if you have your main keynote or featured summit session go over the top like this, then your summit will also be over the top.

I can list off hundreds of different ideas, what's more important is that you get creative; you match your theme & mission with these creative ideas.

Even if you start small and just include a few easier items it's better than no action at all.

The point here is it's time to raise the standards when it comes to summits. Your audience needs to feel emotion, they need to be active instead of passive, they need an experience. They need to be educated and entertained.

They need to be Edu-Tained.

That is the whole goal of our Summit Story program. Create a Summit Story Arc to tell a story, combined with a Summit Action Arc to create an experience.

Together you have a Binge Worthy Summit.

Just imagine how powerful your summit will be if you tied in a story with an experience. If you were able to create a Netflix style summit.

It would catapult you to the next level almost instantaneously.

If you want to get more information about our Summit Story program we have some free trainings over at the resources area at VirtualSummits.com . Just look for the summit story program.

With this you are on your way to get to that next level.

That's my goal for you. I know you have a message that the world needs to hear. An impact that you need to create. Your summit is that answer. It's the way to get that message out in front of the world.

So go out and make an impact.