

Episode 66: The Perfect Summit Session Structure – Summit Storyboard

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Dr. Mark T. Wade: Can you produce a Netflix quality summit using the summit storyboard template and the summit speaker cards? Never ever try to host a summit without first mapping it out with the summit storyboard. Hi, I'm Dr. Mark T. Wade, founder of Virtual Summit Software creator, the One-Day Summit, and your host on the Virtual Summit Podcast. I am excited to kick off today's episode, episode number 66 you can get all the information we talked about in this episode the show notes over at podcast.virtualsummits.com/066. Also don't forget to head over to our resource area on our website over at virtualsummits.com that resource area has all kinds of free resources from the One-Day Summit starter guide, our Summitology Foundations training, as well as our Interview Like a Pro formula free training over there. So check that out at the resources as well as a demo or free trial of Virtual Summit Software. And if you're a speaker, check out our new speaker platform that you can opt in for in order, for free, to get access and found on by more summit hosts to give more speaking opportunities.

Dr. Mark: So today's episode, we've been talking a lot about a specific topic around virtual summits. Lately I've been talking about no more boring summits and what that would mean, what that would take to accomplish. Now I've been on a mission to up level virtual summit so they're more powerful, effective, and more entertaining. After creating the One-Day Summit, I thought that that would be the needle mover for summit hosts and creating better quality summits. Now since the One-Day Summit is shorter, more targeted, more effective at solving problems, we were well on our way to overcoming some of the common pitfalls that many summits and summit hosts fall into. However, there were still so many summit hosts that would then just throw together a One-Day Summit with no real intention, creativity or effort and get confused why it didn't perform to their expectations. The online world is changing and we need to change with it.

Dr. Mark: We cannot just produce low quality, crappy, boring content and expect people to come flooding to it. We need to raise our standards, saw the problem, build a relationship with our audience and we need to entertain them. This is why for the past year I've been focused on what needs to happen to improve the quality of summits. I've been testing and trying and experimenting on my summits as well as my coaching clients summit and our accelerator group coaching program. We've been testing and trying all kinds of different things and I've decided a few factors are, I've identified a few factors that we've decided to hone in on that create the biggest impact and success on the summit. The overall three categories are your messaging. The messaging isn't on point, no one opts into your summit. The third category is the post summit profit strategy. If you don't have a way to monetize your audience through a well-organized customer journey, well then you just did a lot of work to do to not get much results from it.

Dr. Mark: And the second category, which is the one that has not been focused on by anyone previously that were now like pointing the most of our attention to is the summit interview. Now, this category isn't as simple as just saying the interview. In order to

completely address this area, we must look at it from two perspectives. The first being the actual quality of the interview. Most summit hosts never had any actual interview training before, which keep in mind a summit is 100% made of what? Exactly. Interviews. So how in the world do we not think we should get a little training on this first?

Dr. Mark: So we have, we've put a lot of focus on this recently and we've even had some free interview training for summit hosts over in our resource area at virtualsummits.com but here's the kicker, to perform impactful and professional interviews, we can't just look at it from an interview or session perspective. Otherwise we would have 20 great interviews that are randomly strung together or worse, they're just repeats of each other, which honestly is about 60% of some of us out there. So how do we fix that? That is the most important part of the equation, that this is what we call the summit story. This ties the entire summit together. This is what allows your audience to connect with you, the speakers, and the actual mission of the summit. It's also what allows you to identify exactly what should be in each session or interview. No more guessing and no more boring summits.

Dr. Mark: The past couple of trainings I've focused on the summit story concept, which includes two main components: The summit story arc, which focuses on the journey or the story of your summit. It allows you to create a mission and an experience for your audience. It is the difference between a boring summit in a binge worthy summit. Now the second component is the summit action arc, which focuses on creating an experience or an adventure in your summit. This is what creates the engagement with your audience and makes it what we call an edutainment style summit. So now, so now that we have covered both of those aspects, and if you haven't heard those yet, you can go look at the previous episodes on the Virtual Summit Podcast, I've covered those already, but now that we've covered those aspects, we need to discuss how we actually map out a binge worthy summit.

Dr. Mark: That's where the summit storyboard template comes into play. You can download a copy of this template which show a in the show notes of this episode or in the resource area of our website at virtualsummits.com and you can see this here. So let's get started covering what the summit storyboard template actually is and how we use it. First off, I created this off of the concept from movies where they use a storyboard to map out the scenes of their movies. Now know who on would watch a movie of the scenes were all mixed up and this is how the producers can ensure that they have the best scenes to keep the audience entertained and engaged from that concept. I thought wouldn't it be powerful if we created summits like we do movies. If we could create Netflix style summits, then the quality of summits would skyrocket and the success would skyrocket as well.

Dr. Mark: So after using the summit story concept to map out the actual story of our summit and plan out the experiences with the action arc, you then go through and map out the purpose of each session. What is the purpose of this specific session? What do I want the audience to feel and learn? Only after that is when you get to then pick your speakers for the sessions. Now this is a common mistake, summit hosts pick their speakers first and then try to fit them into their summit. This is like trying to squeeze a

scene from a different movie into your film. Don't do it. Map out your summit first, every scene, every session, and what is the purpose? You can then use the summit storyboard template at this point to map out each of the sessions. What the purpose is, and where you want that included throughout the summit.

Dr. Mark: Now, now that you've done that, you've selected the speakers needed, who can best attribute to the purpose of that session? Here's the power behind that. It's now when you are interviewing your speaker, you're not asking them the same 10 generic questions to each speaker. You're also not covering a broad range of topics. With each speaker you're covering one specific purpose. You can go deep and get great information and hopefully some entertainment as well out of every session. We go in depth in our Interview with Impact official training program on how to interview professionally and impactfully for your summits. So a quick recap, you started off mapping out your summit story, the mission and the theme. You then identified the adventure or experience where you will insert the engagement throughout the summit. You then identified the purpose of each session, then brainstorm speakers for those sessions. You then perform an impactful interview with the speakers. Okay. Now the last thing you do is the final summit storyboard flow. Obviously you'll have an idea where you wanted each speaker from the beginning, but sometimes interviews change or other items come out or you change your mind on the arrangement. So what I like to do is to take the summit speaker card that comes along with the summit storyboard template and then fill them out for each speaker. Okay. So if you're just using the digital version, you can just write this out on a Word or Excel document if you want.

Dr. Mark: I like to use my poster size version of the summit storyboard and use the summit speaker cards to map out and move, move around as needed, or as I want with the summit speaker card, you ideally want to look back at your interview. Okay. Now of course, it would make most sense to write those down during or immediately after your interview so you don't have to go back through every interview. So look at, but look back at your notes you took and write them into the summit speaker card. First you're going to identify if the speaker was an anchor, a featured speaker, um, or just a normal speaker. And those cards are uh, you know if you're using the speaker cards are associated with a different color code for each of those, but you can just mark it down as A for anchor, F or featured, and S for just speaker. Now, then you write out the speaker's name, what the purpose of the interview was, noting that it might have changed from what you originally wanted that purpose to be, identify any of the main talking points that came out of the interview.

Dr. Mark: Now for the two most important aspects to identify. First was this a why, a what or a how topic? Meaning was the interview more focused on the theoretical why the topic is important? Was the interview more focused on a strategic idea or a what topic? Was the interview more focused on an implementation style idea or a how topic? This is important for when you go to the final overview on the summit storyboard as there are two ways to look at this. You can either have all your whys together, and all your whats together and all your hows together. Again, that is the theory, the strategy and the implementation. Why, what, how. Or you may want to spread those across the entire summit so that you don't have any whys back to back or any whats back to back. I like this the best as it keeps each session different for the audience.

Dr. Mark: Plus if you're doing a multi-day summit and the audience for some reason only consumes one day, they can still get a good feeling of each of those types of content or the overall story of your summit. Now if you're doing a One-Day Summit, it's the same idea except you would want to look at this more from a morning and an afternoon session depending on how many speakers you have on your summit. The final aspect of the summit speaker card is the summit story concept, so we have to now decide what aspect of the summit story arc did this interview fulfill. It may be more than one, especially if you're following the summit story arc format for your interview flow. However you want to identify the most profound aspects it checked the box on. Was it setting the scene, the problem contributing factors, the climax, the transformation proof or the solution?

Dr. Mark: Again, it will, it will most likely be more than one, but pick the most profound aspect that came from the interview. The one that you feel really went the most in depth or would provide the most value for your audience because remember your audience, the hero, you always want to be thinking about what is in their best case, their best scenario, which is going to be what would they prefer the most. Now, then in the notes you want to identify if there was any specific engagement items from the summit action arc included in that session. Now that you've identified this, you can begin mapping out the mapping out process. Again, if you're just using the digital version, you may just put the speaker's name, the purpose and or the some action arc in in the summit storyboard template, the digital template. Now if you're using one of the poster size printed versions, then you'll take the summit speaker cards and stick them in each session of the summit.

Dr. Mark: What this does is it allows you to see your summit as a whole. To see if it from the summit story perspective all mapped out as well as each session and how it plays in a part of the overall summit story. You, again, you can again look at each aspect to make sure each session flows correctly into the next session. Now if you have enough engagement mixed in throughout the summit, you can check that as well or provide more if you need to add something into it. If you have too many of the same style interviews together, you can look at that and change that like the whys, the whats or the hows. Yeah, you can also quickly and easily switch sessions around if it would flow better in a different layout. All of this done before you actually insert the final version. This is, the summit storyboard template allows you essentially to map out a Netflix style, binge worthy summit using intention and a tension to every single session and how it plays its part in the overall summit story.

Dr. Mark: Gone are the days of just arranging the anchors all on all on day one and then looking at a few of the featured speakers and then just randomly placing all the other speakers in the summit session lineup. We are now creating edutainment style summits that keep our audience engaged and following our summit story from the beginning to the end. Now some people say to me, but Mark, the audience only watches the first day or two and then the engagement falls off, so I need to have the main speakers on first on the first day or day two. My answer to that is, you're right, the audience is only engaging in the first few days, but that's because your summit was boring and not impactful and didn't tell the story. Of course, I'm not talking to any of you listening here because you are the experts who are actually improving your skills and you'll implement the summit

story concept and use the summit storyboard template. When you use this overall concept paired with the summit storyboard template, you create a story that keeps the audience engaged and entertained. Now, it's not to say they're going to watch every session and that's okay because we don't need them to. With the summit storyboard template, you can consciously place each aspect of the summit story arc throughout each day to ensure your audience, if your audience did only watch one day of the summit, they could still walk away with the same emotional response regardless of which day it was.

Dr. Mark: Or if they watched a few sessions every day, they could still go on that summit journey and not feel like they're just seeing the same session over and over. So now you can see why so excited about this overall concept of the summit story using the summit story arc, the summit action arc, and how the summit storyboard template all fit together to allow us to take our summits to a completely higher level. Like I said at the beginning, I've been focused on this for the past year on what we need to do to take summits the next level. Summits are not dead. They will never die, but they do need to evolve.

Dr. Mark: We can't keep running boring summits. It's a disservice to our audience and to our speakers. We need to focus on creating edutainment style summits. I've focused so much over the past year on the messaging and the post summits profit strategy because those were the two areas that were the easiest to improve, increase the power of your message. You increase the conversions on your summit, establish a great post summit profit strategy, and you now have the financial aspect and the customer journey covered to feel a big win from your summit. However, now it's time to focus on the needle mover. That area. That's not the easiest to improve but will ultimately make the biggest impact. That is two specific areas, improving our interview skills so that we interview with impact and creating a summit story that takes our audience on an entertaining and educational journey. Are you with me?

Dr. Mark: You're ready to take your summit to the next level? I promise that those of you who implement this and stop trying to rush your summits and just put something out there, you're going to reap the rewards. I believe we will start seeing viral summits and those hosts are going to see almost overnight go to influencer or celebrity status in their industries. It's not going to be simple or easy, but being the greatest never is so don't forget to check out the actual summit story training in our resources area over at virtualsummits.com. It goes over each of these areas plus some visuals of the summit storyboard template in the summit story arc. You can also get it free download of the summit storyboard template there to the digital version if you're, if you are in the process of getting your summit going. Don't forget about your interview. Grab the free training series over interviewlikeapro.com and create professional and impactful interviews now until the next episode. Remember, I know you have a message that the world needs to hear and an impact you need to create. I believe in you and I want you to succeed and there is no better way to do that than a virtual summit. Now go out there and make an impact in the world.

Dr. Mark: Now, I want to end this episode by saying to all the summit hosts listening right now, I believe in you and you can do this. Summits are by far one of the most powerful ways to quickly grow your list, launch your platform, make more money, and most importantly,

make an impact in the world even if you're just getting started. So don't get caught up in analysis paralysis because the world needs to hear your message, and there are people who are waiting for you to help them just get started because imperfect action is always better than no action. Thank you and see you on the next episode.